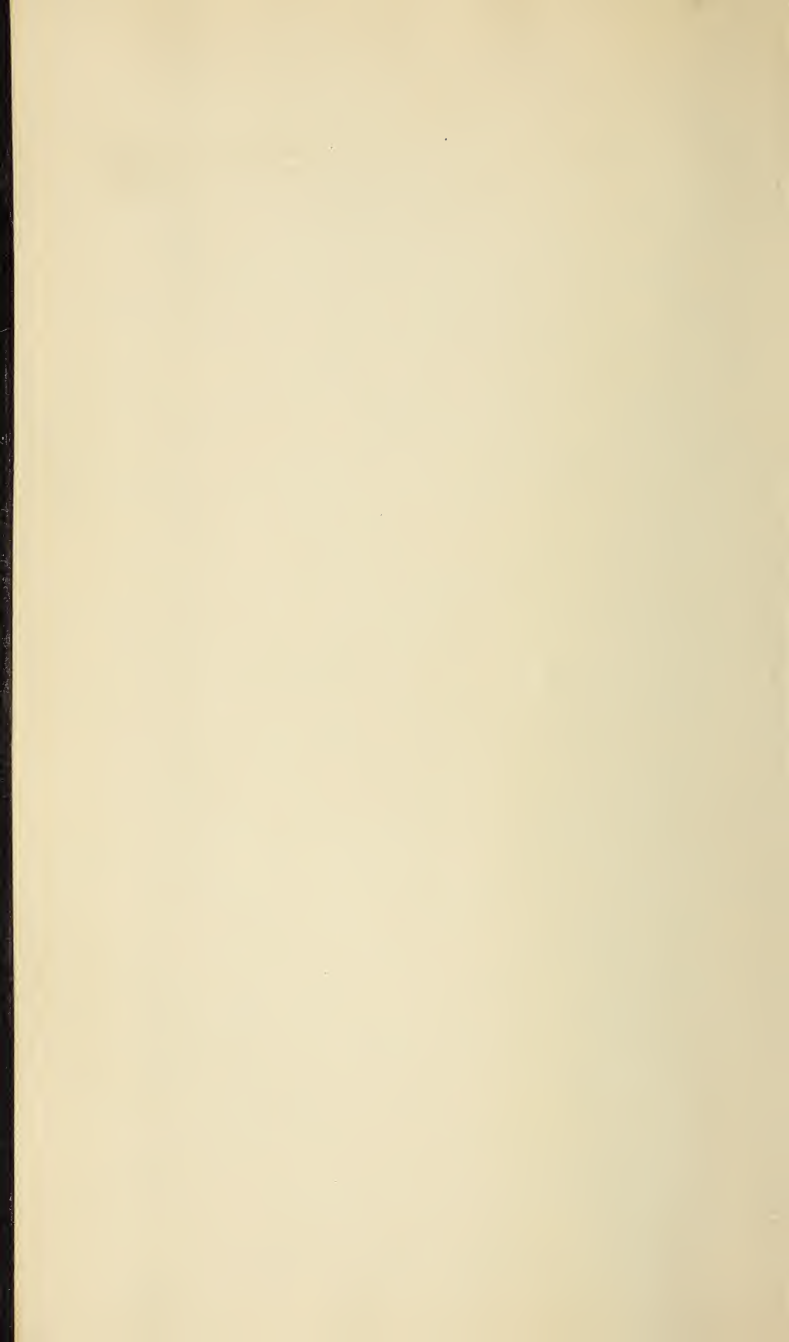




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THE
CATHOLIC BIOGRAPHY;

OR,

Lives of many Persons

EMINENT FOR SANCTITY

IN

Various States of Life,

Mostly from English sources, full & correct, as far as possible

“The just shall shine, and shall run to and fro as sparks among the reeds.”

“I saw a great multitude whom no man could number, of every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation, standing before the Throne of God and the Lamb.”

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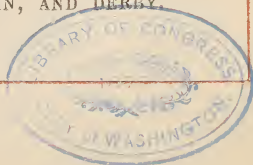
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1846



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Dedication

TO

OUR LADY OF DOLOURS.

O MOST sacred, most amiable, and immaculate Mother of God! delight of angels! and, after Jesus, the Hope of men! O Queen of martyrs! whose blessed soul, wounded by Simeon's prophecy, unceasingly sustained new pangs until that tragic day when, "pierced with the thorns, transfixed with the nails, and sprinkled by the precious blood of Christ, *as of a Lamb unspotted and undefiled,*" you received with anguish indescribable His last sigh, permit me to lay at

your feet, *standing by the Cross*, this little work, as some reparation for the immense share I have had in your unutterable woe. It contains the histories of some who have had the ineffable happiness of never straying from the fold, and thereby grieving your heart; and the Biography of others, who, after imbruing their hands in the blood of your Son, have, through your intercession, returned to Him, and been washed in that redeeming fount, which has its source on Calvary. Bless it, O most dolorous Mother, with your own precious benediction! Make its perusal productive of great glory and love to Jesus and you, and of salvation to man, and the desires of your unworthy child shall be consummated.

*Tremore, Feast of the Holy Name of Mary,
and Vigil of the Holy Cross, 1846.*

Preface

That sanctity of life is attainable in all lawful states—that every condition, every rank, every sphere enjoyed by the members of Christ's *one* true Church has furnished models of gospel virtue—that all can be, and numbers have been, his true imitators—is a truth too manifest to require proof. Every age since the promulgation of christianity abounds in such examples, all ecclesiastical history teems with them. Not to recur to distant ones, many being more struck by those that are recent and in some manner new, we have made a selection, as the title bears, from *every rank in life*, in which the priest and the religious, the virgin and the matron, the merchant and the mechanic, can see how the great precepts of the law, and the counsels of the gospel can be carried out, and made the basis of the system which regulates our life and conduct. And this selection has been made from authentic sources—except the lives of the Rev. Fathers Faber and Alvarez, which were gleaned from the Spanish edition of “*the lives of the first Jesuits*,” that of F. Lallemand, another member of the holy society of Jesus, taken from a genuine French author, and those of Madame St. Beuve, and M. Magdalen Beron, both derived

PREFACE.

from "*the Ursuline Chronicles*—all have been translated from the works of the holy and zealous Abbé Carron, who, driven from his own country by the horrors of the French revolution, did so much in England for the education of its youth, and who was himself a model of every virtue.

A wish having been expressed, a suggestion having been thrown out, in a rather recent number of our *national periodical* * for such a work, as well as our own conviction of its utility, inspires the hope that it may meet a favourable reception in the Catholic literary world; we mean that it may *induce practice*, and thereby serve the only end for which it was intended, to the greater glory of God, and the eternal happiness of our neighbour. If works of fiction are warmly welcomed—and they ought when their tendency is religious as well as recreative and instructive—we humbly submit that tales, histories of real life, ought to be so much the more useful and interesting, as reality surpasses imagination. We shall say no more in recommendation, but leaving the work to speak for itself and stand in its own merits, forthwith introduce it to our readers.

* The Dublin Review.

CATHOLIC BIOGRAPHY.

THE LIFE OF FATHER PETER FABRO, OR FABER.

TRANSLATED FROM THE SPANISH.

CHAPTER I.

THE venerable Father Peter Fabro, or Faber, of the Society of Jesus, whose life we undertake to write, was born in the diocese of Geneva, in the year 1507. He received so pious an education, that even while he tended his father's flocks, he endeavoured with rapid strides to "follow the divine Lamb," and with the approbation of his spiritual guide, made a vow of perpetual chastity. Having expressed his desire of serving God in the holy ministry, when he had already made a great progress in learning, his parents contrived to send him to the college of St. Barbara, in Paris, to complete his studies. He there displayed such virtue and talent, that he was appointed to assist St. Ignatius of Loyola, then a student in the same college, in learning philosophy. Thus commenced that close intercourse which was so advantageous to both; for if Faber helped Ignatius to acquire human science, Ignatius accelerated Faber's progress in the ways of God. Being greatly tormented by temptations against that chastity which he had vowed, and being also solicited to pride and vain glory, he disclosed his state to his holy pupil, and found in his advice

the resolution of his doubts and the relief of his pains. Soon after Ignatius having caused him to make the spiritual exercises which had been so useful to himself, and taught him the practices of meditation, particular examen, &c., he became quite a new man, and quickly advanced through all the paths of the interior life. Being ordained priest, about the year 1534, he received the vow of Ignatius and his companions to go to Palestine for the service of the Christians; or, if this could not be effected in a year, to offer themselves to be disposed of according to the good pleasure of the Pope. This after giving them the holy communion on the feast of the Assumption of the ever Blessed Virgin in the chapel of Montmartre. In this vow he too concurred, and before the 25th of January, 1537, the time fixed for its fulfilment, he had so far gained three others, already doctors in divinity, that they too joined the standard of Ignatius.

Being authorised by an indult from his holiness Paul III. to receive holy orders from whatsoever bishop they pleased, they were ordained at Venice by the bishop of Arbe. They then dispersed themselves about Verona and Vicenza, to preach and instruct the people, until an opportunity might occur of going to the Holy Land; but a war having broken out between the Venetians and the Turks about the expiration of the year, they were compelled to relinquish their first design, and in pursuance of their vow they went to offer themselves to the Pope. He received them graciously, and forthwith appointed Father Faber to teach divinity in the Sapienza at Rome, while Laynez explained the holy Scriptures, and Ignatius and the others served in the hospitals and instructed the ignorant, both there and at Venice.

CHAPTER II.

AFTER labouring some time in these several offices, the holy founder, Ignatius, with a view to perpetuate the work of God, assembled them all at Rome, and proposed to them his design of forming themselves into a religious order. After recommending the matter to God, all acquiesced, and resolved that besides the vows of poverty and chastity already made, they would add that of perpetual obedience to a general chosen from amongst them, whose authority would be absolute, and government perpetual, but, at the same time, entirely dependant on the Pope.

Paul III. having approved of the new order, erected under the title of the Jesuits, or Fathers of the Society of Jesus, by a bull of the 27th September, 1540, Ignatius was chosen general much against his will, and about the beginning of the next year, all having made their solemn vows, he set himself to write the constitutions.

In a short time, the great good operated by the Jesuits became so evident, that their fame was spread all over Europe, and applications were made for them by many princes; Father Faber was in consequence sent to Spain, where he performed wonders. His words were so efficacious, that by only saying to a young man, Maximilian Capela, Do you wish to embrace our institute? he caused him to renounce the world and become his novice, though until then he had not the slightest intention of doing so. When leaving Spain for Germany, the two chaplains of her Royal Highness the Infanta, who by her order accompanied him from Ocana to Toledo, were so moved by the good Father's conversation that

they could not think of returning, and both became fervent members of the Society. But if he operated so much good in Spain, he did still more in Germany, as we shall now see.

CHAPTER III.

FATHER FABER CONVERTS MANY HERETICS IN GERMANY, &c.

THE Lutheran heresy having made such great ravages in Germany, Father Faber was sent there to arrest its progress. When he arrived in Espira, one of the cities of that empire, the clergy, who were very disorderly, strongly opposed him; but, by his prudence and affability, he gained considerably on them. He converted numbers of heretics, reduced several monasteries to the observance of religious discipline, and roused the prelates and pastors to labour earnestly for their flocks. He produced wonderful fruit by his sermons and exhortations; even the heretics were so pleased with him, that on leaving Espira they deeply felt his departure. He converted a famous doctor of theirs by his affability and services; these were the arms he employed, knowing that when the heart is moved it is easier to convince the mind.

By his exertions many of the clergy who had hitherto lived in great licentiousness, took up again the spirit of their holy state; religious discipline too was better observed; and, in fine, the people became so pious, that the parish priests there had more communicants at the Easter of that year, than during the twenty years which preceded it.

The success which attended his labours, in-

spired a hope that he might be able to bring back the whole empire to the fold of the church. The Pope's nuncio was so struck by it, that he prevailed on his holiness to oblige Father Faber to remain at Cologne, the archbishop of which was infected with the errors of the day, otherwise he would have gone to Eborac at the request of the king of Portugal. While there, he spared no pains to stem the violence of the heretical party, grown insolent under the connivance of the archbishop. He preached frequently, many of the most respectable among the inhabitants attended his sermons, and truth became so irresistible in his mouth, that some theologians, the entire university, most of the clergy, and numberless others joined him. But his exertions did not end here; days and nights were spent by him in hearing confessions, in visiting relaxed monasteries, and in many other good works. He endeavoured by his letters to procure defenders of our holy faith, and engaged several eminent prelates to obtain from the emperor Charles the expulsion of Bucer and his adherents. He held frequent disputations with the heretics, and manifested in them such wisdom and erudition, that he was universally admired; those who before fancied themselves learned, were now convinced how remote they were from his science. The partisans of error no longer dared to propagate openly their pernicious tenets, and the archbishop too was kept in awe by the presence of the Father, so that he was styled by many, the Saviour of Cologne.

His success may in great measure be attributed to his fervent prayer. He used sometimes to shut himself up in a little chapel, commonly styled the golden chamber, in which were preserved the

relics of St. Ursula and her 11000 virgin companions, and there, prostrate on the floor, pour out his soul before God for the wants of his holy church. He frequently offered the holy sacrifice there, and was there favoured with many celestial favours, so that he came forth firm as a rock against the storms raised to overwhelm him; and though alone, and poor, and humble, he became the terror of his proudest adversaries.

The following letter, addressed to Father James Laynez, afterwards general of the Society, shows how skilled he was in the manner of treating with heretics.

“ May the grace and peace of our Redeemer ever reign in our hearts. For want of time, as also from the weakness occasioned by my illness, I have hitherto deferred to give the necessary information to those who wish to labour for the conversion of heretics, as your Reverence desired. But I shall now say something; and first, Those who would bring back the abettors of error, should endeavour to conceive for them a strong and hearty affection. This they should testify by every external mark; it will in time inspire reciprocal sentiments, and ultimately prevail on them to embrace the practices of Christian mortification, which paves the way for the subjection of the mind to the obedience required by holy faith. In the first ages the gospel tenets should be proposed before the morality; but in these times it is necessary to adopt the contrary course, and to draw men from their vices, before we speak to them of their errors. I for the present forbear giving a signal proof of what I advance. Again, as the Lutherans make no account of good works, we should try to induce them to their performance. When they say it is useless to pray, or hear Mass,

and impossible to fast and mortify oneself, we should persuade them to make the trial. He who would use no other means to convert these persons, than to recommend the practice of prayer and meditation on the four last things, &c. would labour perhaps better than if to convince their understanding he quoted every text that makes against them, from Genesis to Revelations. The people should be drawn by admonition to the fear of God and love of virtue. Behold the panacea for their evils. May Jesus, the Saviour, who knows that his written word will not alone suffice to save us, touch our hearts with his holy grace, Amen.

“BROTHER PETER FABER.”

For the great fruit produced by this holy man in other cities of Germany, as well as the sanctity of his life, we have the testimony of Father Canisius. Having learned by revelation of the establishment of a certain order for the salvation of souls, and which he himself was to embrace, Canisius, on hearing of Father Faber, at once knew that his was the institute, and set out for Maguncia, where the Father then was, and entered the Society. Hear how he relates it, in a letter to a friend.

“I have happily reached Maguncia, where, to my great spiritual advantage, I have found the man whom I have so long sought for, if he be a man and not an angel. In my life I have not found one more holy, or more learned; all his anxiety is to co-operate in the work of redemption; he scarcely speaks a word which tends not to the glory of God, and this without being annoying to his hearers. His fame has induced many ecclesiastics and religious to place themselves under

his direction. Among others the celebrated Cocleo says, he cannot sufficiently thank God for favouring him with his guidance. I have made the spiritual exercises under him, and can hardly tell their good effects ; my whole soul is changed, my mind illumined, my memory purified, my will strengthened, and I renewed in body and soul and become quite a new man." Thus far Canisius. We shall now see what the Father effected in Louvain.

CHAPTER IV.

THE LABOURS OF THE FATHER IN LOUVAIN.

ON returning from Germany to Spain, Father Faber visited Louvain, so famed for its university, where his stay was miraculously prolonged. F. Cornelius Uvishabeo, a holy priest of that city, who by his zealous preaching had wrought many conversions, and by his virtues gained the admiration of all, had been long wishing for such an institute as that of St. Ignatius, when, lo ! some of our Fathers came to Louvain. He soon became linked with them in the bonds of indissoluble friendship, which, because of his respectability, greatly accredited them in the public mind, and finally expressed his wish to join the Society. Just then Father Faber arrived ; he most cordially received Cornelius, but damped his spirits not a little by saying, that he could not remain in Louvain longer than the next morning, being commanded by Father Ignatius to go to Portugal before he proceeded to Spain. It amused him somewhat to hear the earnest petition which Cornelius made, that he might be obliged to remain until he had done what was necessary for the sal-

vation of the inhabitants; but he soon recognised its efficacy, for he was at once attacked by a tertian ague, which obliged him to keep his bed. For two months he was attended by the physicians, but all their prescriptions were ineffectual, and his recovery began to be despaired of. Recognising his illness at length to be the effect of Cornelius's prayer, he entreated him to beg his cure, which was no sooner done than he found himself perfectly well, to the great amazement of the physicians. All now saw the hand of God in this incident, for even while extended on his bed, the good Father did wonders for the divine glory.

Having received into the Society the holy priest Cornelius, to secure him from the assaults of vain glory, because of the esteem in which he was held, Father Faber continued for two months to try his patience and humility in every possible way, treating him publicly and privately as a poor ignorant person. Sometimes he caused him to wait with his time-glass in his hand while a brother, named Estrada, preached to the people, though he was an older priest and a much better preacher. At other times he gave him, without cause, most severe reprehensions. Now he commanded him to write something, and when done, he tore it up or blotted it over, and caused him to write it again and again without appearing satisfied with the writing or punctuation. At night, he prescribed to him the order to be observed in the next day's actions. If there was a journey to be made, he mentioned the road he was to take; when he had business to do, he told him the words he should use, and these were often foreign to his purpose. He sometimes required him to perform very difficult things, and which interfered one with another. Cornelius profited so well in

his school that he became perfect in all virtue. He had so much respect for Father Faber that he scarcely uttered a word in his presence, and asked his permission for the least things.

He was not the only person benefited by the detention of the Father; Brother Estrada, by means of his instructions, became a zealous missionary and an excellent preacher. When only reading philosophy the concourse to his sermons was immense, so that he was often obliged to preach outside the church. Lest this occupation might deprive him of sufficient time for study, his good spiritual father used to compose for him as he lay sick in bed. Thus he shared in the merit of the innumerable conversions which these discourses effected, and which may indeed be attributed to his own spirit, which seemed to be transmitted to Estrada.

During his illness so many persons came to beg the advice of Father Faber, that his recovery was greatly retarded; but he would have none refused admittance. They heard him as an oracle, and saw by what afterwards occurred, that he was under the immediate influence of the Divine Spirit. Many persons made under him the spiritual exercises of St. Ignatius; one of them, a great dignitary, begged to be received into the society; but the Father advised him to remain among the secular clergy, judging that, by his good example, he would greatly benefit that venerable body. Some monasteries of religious women, who hitherto lived in great relaxation, utter strangers to the spirit of their state, having placed themselves under his direction, he wrought so great a change in them, that they became models of religious observance, and worthy spouses of Jesus Christ.

By his advice many embraced the monastic state, and others, remaining in the world, consecrated themselves to God by the vow of perpetual chastity. Among those whom he admitted to the Society, were the five masters in arts and some doctors of the University. These were at first greatly opposed by their friends and parents; but soon, edified by the constancy with which they resisted their solicitations, and at the fervour with which they sacrificed them to the Lord, they came to congratulate them on their choice and encourage them to perseverance.

CHAPTER V.

FATHER FABER MAKES SPAIN THE THEATRE OF HIS LABOURS.

FROM Louvain Father Faber proceeded to Portugal, whence, after cultivating some time the vineyard of the Lord, he passed into Spain. The Archbishop of Toledo, the Pope's legate, and several other great persons, placed themselves almost immediately under his direction, being moved thereto by the esteem in which he was held by his Portuguese Majesty. On arriving at Valladolid, where the court was then held, he took up his quarters at the hospital as usual, the command of the prince alone induced him to choose a more commodious lodging. This good father's engagements at court did not prevent him from exercising his ministry in the city. He and Father Aroz preached in the public places to crowded auditories, taught children and adults the Christian doctrine, visited the prisons and

hospitals, and heard the confessions of those whom their sermons induced to return to God.

The Divine benediction was evident on their labours, the face of society being soon quite changed and altered. These treated now of prayer and mortification, who hitherto only thought of vanity and amusements. Many devoted themselves to serve the hospitals and perform other works of charity. The reputation of the Fathers was soon diffused from Valladolid through the provinces. Some called them the *Ignacions*, from their founder St. Ignatius; others the *Papists*, because of their vow of obedience to the Holy See; while almost all conferred on them the appellation of *Apostles*, sent by God to rouse men from the lethargy in which they had been hitherto lulled.

Some persons at court having expressed their surprise, that treating with all sorts of persons of both sexes the Father still preserved such modesty and recollection; Father Melchior Cano, who resided there, said it was because they carried about them a certain herb which conferred the gift of purity, and that all the society were provided therewith. This being related to the prince, he commissioned Don John of Tuinga to inquire of the Fathers the name of the wonderful plant, that he also might share in its efficacious properties; Father Aroz, without much hesitation, said that it was called *the fear of God*, which answer procured him great applause. The king greatly favoured the Society, seeing the wonderful fruits produced by the Fathers. These were so great, that, lest his brethren might be elated and attribute them to their own exertions, Father Faber used to say, it was now the good seed formerly sown in Spain by St. Ignatius was

bringing forth fruit, and that God permitted the sons to reap the victories of the father.

To aid them in their glorious work, he received into the Society many excellent subjects, many of whom were drawn to God in an extraordinary manner. One of them, a nobleman of Castile, before the arrival of the Fathers, saw them in sleep, accompanied by the Holy Virgin, who having asked him if he desired to serve her Son, told him to follow these men, and then disappeared. The manner in which John Nugnez Barreto, afterwards the Patriarch of Ethiopia, was drawn to the Society, is no less wonderful. He was a secular priest, very pious, and so devoted to the exercise of prayer, that he spent in it every day five or six hours, accompanying it with great mortifications. Though he was so attentive in the confessional, so frequently in the pulpit, and so devout at the altar, that he was generally denominated the holy priest, yet it always seemed to him that he was not doing what God wished, that something more was required of him. Knowing his perplexity, his brother Melchior Nugnez, already of the Society, proposed to him to embrace it, saying he would find therein sufficient to gratify his most ardent desires of a more perfect life. But John, though he much esteemed the institute, could not be wrought upon, imagining that its functions would not leave him time enough for prayer, and the exercises of the interior life, but determined, after many masses offered to know the divine will, to consult Father Faber, who was then at Coimbria. At the same juncture he had a vision, in which he saw the Father saying mass, and he himself serving it. Fearing this might be an illusion, he had recourse to the Blessed Virgin, who by a visible apparition, confirmed

him in his purpose, and referred him to Father Faber for the solution of his difficulties. No more was necessary. Nugnez at once set out, and, attired in the poorest manner, arrived at Coimbria. All his former apprehensions now returned. It seemed to him that if he entered the society, and employed himself in the conversion of souls, he would lose interior peace, and that sweetness which is felt in living solitary with God. In this state of mind he was introduced to F. Faber, whom he at once recognised as the person whom he had been shown. After discovering to him his whole soul, the Father declared to him, that he was called to a more perfect life. I tell you candidly my opinion, said Father Faber, lest at the day of judgment you might plead ignorance. God wishes you to serve him in holy poverty and obedience, and that you not only labour for the salvation of one people, but be ready to go to any part of the world to promote his greater glory at the expense of your own peace and quiet; and it is because you do not obey him that he has reduced you to this state of perplexity, and deprived you of his wonted consolations. On hearing this Nugnez threw himself at his feet, and professed his sincere will to be guided in all things by him. Well, said Father Faber, when you rise to-night to make your ordinary prayer, offer yourself unreservedly to God, defy the devil, setting before you all you may meet in the society contrary to your taste and inclination; and in the morning, after saying mass, deliberate before the Holy Sacrament what you would wish to have done at the hour of death. The good Nugnez obeyed; he had a great conflict it is true, but he came off victorious. In his prayer and while offering the holy Sacrifice, he was favoured with such

a knowledge of the perfection of our institute, and felt so convinced of its fitness for him, that he at once entered the noviceship. He performed the most abject functions with such joy and alacrity, as Father Faber said he had never before met, and as for his docility, it far surpassed that of persons the most tried in the religious life. Nugnez made such a progress in perfection, that he was promoted to the patriarchate of Ethiopia, and died holily at Goa. Behold some of the fruits of the great lights of our Venerable Father. His virtues were equally wonderful, as we shall now see.

CHAPTER VI.

EMINENT VIRTUES OF FATHER FABER.

THIS venerable man among other virtues possessed a great spirit of prayer. He spent in it many hours each day, and made use of every object that struck his eye to raise his mind to God, particularly when journeying from one place to another. On reaching the suburbs of a town, he invoked the blessed Spirit who guarded it, and the angels of all those who dwelt therein, to defend him and them from sin and all danger, and to further by their intercession the end of his visit. His frequent illnesses did not interrupt his communications with God. If he sometimes felt dry and without sentiment on these occasions, by recollecting this of the Psalmist, In tribulation Thou hast enlarged me, he was consoled, and humbly added with the same inspired author, In pace dormiam et requiescam; "In this peace will I sleep and rest." Sometimes, when violent headaches kept him

whole nights without sleeping, his prayer was to place his head near that of his divine Master, and to desire to be pierced with the thorns that enwreathed it.

The ordinary matter of his meditations was the death and passion of Jesus Christ. He had some very excellent methods of prayer. One was, in reciting the litanies of the saints, to converse interiorly with them from time to time, or place before them some stage of our Lord's passion, and beseech them by it to obtain the object of some particular request. At other times he made a prayer of the different parts of the Christian doctrine, begging of our Lord the entire observance of each, by him and all Christians.

This holy man had a singular devotion to the Blessed Virgin. He divided her life into three parts, denominating from her Immaculate Conception till her Annunciation, the time of preparation; from thence till the Resurrection of our Lord, the time of compassion; and from the Resurrection till her Assumption, the time of desire. He was very devout also to the angels, and destined one day in each week to honour them. To the saints, particularly St. John Baptist and St. Martin, he frequently offered the tribute of his veneration. He kept a catalogue of the patron saints of the places through which he passed in his Breviary, and frequently invoked their aid. On the feasts of the martyrs he assisted in spirit at their combats; and on the festivals of the virgins, he begged of our Lord to make all Christians his everlasting sanctuaries. On the feast of any particular saint, he thanked the Divine Majesty for the graces bestowed on him; congratulated the Blessed Virgin and the angel-guardian of the saint for the graces they procured him, and finally

begged the manifestation of such of his virtues and good works as were not yet known, for the increase of devotion towards him.

If Father Faber advanced so rapidly in the science of holy prayer, it was because of the fervent attention he preserved therein, and the great preparation he carried thereto. He used to say, that without preparation for prayer, a person resembled one who endeavoured to fill a broken vase with a precious liquor, and that the best sign of loving God was to be attentive while conversing with him. For his part, he omitted no means to free himself from distractions during this holy exercise. When reciting the divine office, he used to pronounce between each psalm some little aspiration, as, "Heavenly Father, give me the good Spirit!" and experienced great advantage from it. On some occasions, at the commencement of each canonical hour, he pronounced ten times the holy name of Jesus and Mary, to preserve the remembrance of them while reciting it. At other times he commenced the office by the consideration of some stage of our Lord's Passion, and as he proceeded, he increased so much in the sentiment of these dolorous mysteries, that when he reached the ninth hour, he felt, in a certain degree, that anguish which our blessed Lord felt in giving up the ghost.

He considered it a point of great importance, especially for the novices, to choose a quiet and retired place to recite the office. He recommended to them to set before them interiorly the saints whom they commemorated therein, and to consider attentively the words of the psalms, lessons, &c., that they might taste the delicious manna contained in them. He used to tell them

that after adhering to the following rules, they might reasonably excuse the distractions they suffered in prayer. 1st. When the time for making it came, to put a stop to all other considerations, and reflect for a moment what they were going to do. 2nd. To make a compact with themselves to be attentive till such a psalm was said, and then another, till all were finished. 3rd. To endeavour to bring from the office the spirit of devotion, and to try to preserve it in their usual occupations.

He learned by experience what St. Basil has advanced, that the principal cause of distractions in prayer, was the want of due attention to the presence of God, who beholds us, and too great solicitude about the future. Hence it was that he so strongly advised to actuate well before prayer the Divine presence, and to banish all other cares from the mind, save that of performing well this holy exercise. If the soul be spread on a multiplicity of objects, said he, it cannot properly give its attention to any; and he who is careful to execute well our Lord's affairs, will be afterwards helped by him in his own. But if, by failing to do so, a person was distracted, he advised them to excite themselves to sorrow for the fault, and to endeavour to prevent it on the next occasion; and this rather through respect for the majesty of Him before whom they prayed, than for any annoyance which they themselves endured.

This good father never failed, except when it was absolutely impossible, to offer the holy sacrifice every day. It would be difficult to describe his fervour and devotion in immolating the victim-Lamb. He said that our Lord instituted this sacred mystery, that participating therein by means

of Holy Communion, we might be able to say, "The kingdom of God is within us." He earnestly wished to be present in every place where Jesus resides sacramentally, and to dedicate to this ever amiable mystery, all the senses of his body and powers of his soul. Once in assisting at a procession of this Blessed Sacrament at Maguncia, he said, that it was a singular mercy of our Lord to give Himself thus to men, since every one could honour him; some by their voices, others by the harmonious sounds with which they filled the air; these by the rich tapestries which they prepared for the occasion, and those by the flowers with which they strewed the way.

When preparing for the Holy Sacrifice, he had recourse to St. John Baptist, who prepared the Jews for Christ. He said that a person who approaches the holy table with a conviction of sin, is like a slave who intrudes himself into the presence of his offended master, without having appeased his anger.

This good father received from God very sensible consolations. He said that they helped to lighten the burden of the cross, and were sometimes given in reward of having borne it well. But, like most servants of God, he was tried by dryness and aridity, particularly during the entire of one year. He accepted this trial from the hand of God, as designed to show him more clearly his own miseries, to excite him to serve Him with more fervour, and to teach him in some manner what a misfortune it is to be for ever separated from the Sovereign Good, since a temporary banishment from him occasions such anguish. To console himself in these trials, he used to think how our Lord, for a long time, concealed the splendour of his Divinity; how often the

Blessed Virgin was deprived of his company during his earthly mission, and the like. He used to say that the best means for preserving or obtaining divine consolations, was to renounce human ones, for the latter often deprived us of the former. One day, in Holy Week, having begged of our Lord to mitigate the great interior anguish he endured, he heard him say interiorly: "Why now, my son, would you seek to come down from the cross whilst living, since I have not descended from it till after my death? Rejoice in being without consolation, taking care that it be not owing to any failure on your part; suffer courageously the rebellions of old Adam; be content, though you produce no fruit in souls, and when you have done all this, you will experience true peace and consolation." The good father obeyed this counsel, and ever after endeavoured to preserve holy joy in the most trying occasions. He was a great enemy to sadness and melancholy indeed at all times, saying, that of two evils he would prefer excessive joy to excessive sadness.

Deeply impressed with the consideration of the application with which our Lord seemed to prepare during the thirty years of His hidden life, for the labours of His mission, by the practice of all the virtues, Father Faber continually animated himself to advance in the way of perfection. No day passed without a new step towards it. He considered the following as very powerful means of going to God: Great exterior moderation and interior peace in action, vigilance over the movements of the heart, great fervour at the divine office, great sorrow at the tribunal of penance, great devotion at mass, great piety in his various functions, and great zeal in preaching the word of God. He had a great devotion to the feasts of

the Holy Trinity and to the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin. On these holy feasts he examined himself on his observance of the foregoing rules, and after thanking God for the graces bestowed on him during the year, animated himself anew to observe them. He used to say, that nothing encouraged him so much to serve God as the prospect of possessing him eternally. He often raised himself in spirit to the celestial kingdom, wishing to say with the apostle; *Conversatio nostra in cœlis est*; Our conversation is in heaven.

Knowing that humility is the first qualification for the kingdom of God, he endeavoured to acquire it in an eminent degree. Hence, he was never elated with the success that crowned his labours, nor sought to manifest the great fruit he produced in souls; he attributed it solely to God, considering himself but the mere instrument. He delighted in the meanest offices, and chose what was most abject in each employ. Once, when in Spain, while hearing the confessions of poor servants, it occurred to him, that his time would be better employed with persons of quality, but he repressed the thought so vigorously that he never experienced more light or strength in abject offices, nor such a desire of continuing them. He affirmed that God prepares singular recompences for those who, for his love, devote themselves to the service of the humble and the poor.

This good father delighted in being reprehended publicly and by all persons for his faults. In all times and circumstances he exercised humility. Thus, in hearing confessions, he considered that as a broom, though it cleans up the house, still remains filthy, so he, after cleansing the interior of

God's servants, remained still in his misery and defilement. He desired that all the society should adopt the same idea. One day that he went to the royal chapel in Castile, the porter, not knowing him, shut the door in his face, and very uncivilly refused him admittance: the humble father, without discovering himself, rejoiced at being so treated, and remained outside, considering with himself, how badly he had kept the house of his soul, allowing the devil to enter by his wicked suggestions, and repulsing the Holy Spirit, sometimes making him knock long and earnestly before he gave him admittance. "O Jesus!" said he, on this occasion, "who camest to thy own without being received, and who every day ineffectually demandest admittance to our hearts, pardon us by thy infinite patience, make this porter keep as well the gate of his soul, and grant that none of our Society may shrink from humiliations." This humility was perfected by love of God and the neighbour; hence, his great zeal for the Divine honour and the good of souls. He said that he should rather be Peter than John, because the one loved while the other was loved; and that he would not estimate the loss of his soul so much by the torments of hell, as by the value of the precious blood shed in redeeming it. No labour seemed great when there was question of collecting this precious price of our ransom, as is evident from the journeys he made and the trials he endured for the conversion of souls. His patience and mildness in treating with all were truly admirable. A young man having promised to come to confession to him, twice neglected to keep his word, and the third time kept him waiting for the space of six hours; but he consoled himself for the delay, considering how much

longer worldlings wait when there is a prospect of some temporal advantage.

Sickness placed no impediment to his zeal; it appeared to him that he suffered nothing, so great was his fervour. Sometimes, when provided with a mule in travelling from one place to another, he gave the beast to his companion and made the journey on foot. He thanked our Lord for contradictions, being, as he said, the portion of the just, and offered them for the conversion of his persecutors. He rejoiced at public calamities, pestilences, famine, and the like, forasmuch as they excited sinners to repentance; but he felt at the impatience with which many suffered them. He delighted in serving in the hospitals, saying it was a certain means of being regaled with the Divine sweetness. He often begged from door to door for the sick poor, invoked their good angels to cure and relieve them, and excited the governors and physicians of hospitals, those asylums of human woes, to the perfect discharge of their duty.

This good man was most careful in guarding against every sort of uncharitableness; he termed aversions an icy chillness, with which the devil seeks to destroy in our souls the principle of the Christian life. Let us consider the virtues of our neighbour, he would say, and be blind to his defects, and if he does us an injury, let us render him a service. One day, while saying mass, the defects of some persons having crossed his mind, he at once said in himself, If you condemn your neighbour, God will judge you in justice, and what will you then answer Him after your numberless sins? He thus finished the sacrifice with great charity and peace. Like Moses, he desired to bear the burdens of all, to "become an anathema for his brethren." Indeed, it gave him real content to

suffer for others, and he failed not in employing in their favour the miraculous powers conferred on him by our Lord, curing many, by only reading over them the gospel of St. John, or invoking for them the holy name of Jesus. Of this we have testimony the most authentic.

He prayed so fervently for others, that sometimes he could scarcely finish Mass by reason of his tears. He was most zealous for the relief of the souls in Purgatory; their deliverance he deemed a most charitable work, and he tried to effect it, particularly by offering for them the prayers of the Church.

All these virtues of Father Faber were accompanied by a singular prudence. He used to arrange at night such employs of the next day as were not regulated by the rule, and in their performance attended chiefly to these three things: 1st. Whether what he did was likely to redound to the glory of God. 2nd. With what intention he was to perform it. 3rd. In what manner it was to be performed. His discourse was always of God or something connected with his service; even when transacting business he managed to lead his hearers to God. He used to say, that those of the society ought to leave, as they indeed do, in all places the fame of their sanctity. One time, passing through Florence, it being winter, he was obliged to stop at night in an inn, in which a gang of robbers, seventeen in number, had just then put up; he had even to sup at the same table. After the repast, being grown warm, they began a most licentious conversation, and wondering why the Father remained quite silent, asked him what he thought of their discourse. Why, said he in a firm tone, and striking the table with his hand, I am apprehensive that the judgments of God

are hanging over and just ready to fall on you. The banditti were so struck by these few words, that before his departure they confessed their sins with evident marks of sorrow, and totally changed their lives.

He effected numberless other conversions; the most obdurate could scarcely resist the spirit which spoke in him. He said, that to affect his hearers, a preacher should first deeply feel the doctrine he announced, and preach it in the same sentiment. The spiritual exercises of our holy Father Ignatius had a particular efficacy when given by Father Faber. Indeed, with much less, he effected wonderful changes. Thus a gentleman of Valladolid having heard of the great things he did, came to beg he would teach him how to pray. The Father, after observing him earnestly, bid him meditate on the contradiction in these four sentences. "Christ poor, and I rich—Christ hungry, and I filled—Christ suffering, and I in delight—Christ naked, and I clothed." The gentleman, who expected to hear something very sublime, was not a little disappointed at the simplicity of this instruction; but one day, soon after, being at a banquet with persons of great rank, and observing the dainties with which the tables were overspread, he remembered the words, Christ hungry, &c., and they wrought so powerfully upon him, that with tears in his eyes he left the entertainment, and went to recount all to the good Father and beg of him the spiritual exercises, which he made with great fruit and advantage.

St. Ignatius used to say that the exercises, when given by Father Peter, produced more fruit than in the hands of any other of the Society, and surely his testimony is unexceptionable. Indeed,

there was no spiritual disease inveterate enough to elude the efficacy of his remedies. He received the greatest sinners with sweetness, his lips distilled honey as it were to gain them to God; for, like St. Francis de Sales, who lived near his time, he thought it dangerous to treat them harshly, at least in the beginning. He discovered this sweetness of spirit in his advice to a certain religious man. You should imagine, said he, that being a living member of the body of your community, all your movements should be very measured, lest you cause disunion. It is necessary, he would say, to preserve peace and charity with all; and this requires us to applaud the ideas, &c. of others when not contrary to the divine law; never to condemn them for their defects, lest a heavier judgment fall upon ourselves; never to contradict them obstinately or show a preference of our own opinion; and if at any time the least dispute arise, to put an end to it instantly, to seek an immediate reconciliation, according to the advice of the apostle, "Let not the sun go down on your anger."

Reverence the superiors, said he, on other occasions, always speak well of them; and be mild and affable to your equals. If raised to the superiority, strive to advance those under your care, remembering the strict account you must render of your administration.

Our father's love of regularity and attention to religious observance was singular, having to treat with so many persons, and being obliged to appear so often at the court of kings. His spirit of poverty too was admirable. He vowed its observance previous to the establishment of the Society. He generally took up his residence in the worst lodging he could find, and lived chiefly on alms. When the Queen Donna Maria of Castile, offered

to provide for him and the other fathers on coming to that kingdom, he absolutely refused it, preferring to live poor like Jesus Christ to her great edification. Having sometimes on the road experienced an apprehension that necessities would not be had in the place to which he happened to be journeying, he at once produced contrary acts, and to overcome it perfectly resolved to give up every year all that he possessed; as clothes, books, food, &c. and that if at any time this were impossible, by reason of his not having wherewith to supply his wants, he begged our Lord to teach him what course to pursue, and to preserve in him the same love for holy poverty. He frequently exercised interior acts of this virtue, lest he should grow negligent in its practice; the more it is exercised, said he, even interiorly, the more we become enamoured of it.

But if Father Faber surpassed in any virtue, it was that of holy chastity.

In order to be angelically pure, he endeavoured to guard his senses most vigilantly. Coming one day from the palace of the king of Portugal, he met the retinue of a great duke, who was then at the king's levee; and beholding every one run to get a sight of the train, he felt tempted to raise his eyes; but instead of doing so, he slipt into a church and fixed them on the crucifix, when the temptation completely vanished. He thanked our Lord then for admitting him to his presence, and allowing him to look upon his sacred humanity, which not only remedied the disorders of the eyes, but those of all the senses.

One feast of the Presentation of the ever blessed Virgin, he resolved never to look at persons of the other sex of any age whatever. He treated

his body most rigorously, being sometimes six days without eating, and at all times taking food in very small quantities. When on preaching in a place, he was invited to the house of the Bishop, or the parish priest, he refused to go, preferring to dine on a little hard bread given him in alms. He gave an excellent antidote to our fathers when obliged to stop at inns, to preserve them from the dangers to which they might be exposed. This was, on entering, to speak to the landlord and his family with zeal and fervour of God and salvation; for by thus declaring what sort of persons they were, they would impose a restraint on that licentiousness which generally prevails in these places. He was so deaf to the voice of flesh and blood, that he refused to visit his friends on passing near the place of his nativity. But his obedience was still more extraordinary, since his death was occasioned by the exact fulfilment of his superior's commands, as we shall now see.

CHAPTER VII.

HOLY AND EDIFYING DEATH OF FATHER FABER.

WHILE our servant of God illumined all Spain by his preaching and example, and gained many to God, the king of Portugal expressed a wish to send him to Ethiopia, in quality of Patriarch, but the pope having appointed him his theologian in the council of Trent, directed St. Ignatius to call him to Rome. Though very ill, the good Father at once set out, determined to sacrifice his life for holy obedience, and leaving his spiri-

tual children in great grief for his departure. Having taken Valentia in his way, in order to visit St. Francis Borgia, then duke of Gandia, on arriving at the confines of Castile, he wrote the following note:

“We arrived here (Valentia) on Thursday in Easter week. I cannot say what I thought or felt on passing the boundary between this kingdom and that of Castile. I thought of the many negligences I committed there, and how much more I might have done for God; and I imagined that to repair them, I ought to be sent to labour there again and again. May our Lord pardon me. I allude not to the labours, but to the faults. We have no rest day or night, yet I taste some consolation. I know not, if those experience the like who have cast off the cross of our Lord.”

Having given the good duke the spiritual exercises with great fruit, he conceived a lively affection for the Society, and determined on founding a college of the Fathers in Gandia, of which he obliged Father Faber to lay the first stone. While there, the good Father was highly favoured by the B. Virgin. Being once in prayer before an image of hers, which had the eyes cast down, they were suddenly raised, and ever after continued so. This image was thence called, *Our Lady of the miracle*. It is at present in the convent of the Carmelite nuns at Madrid, and when carried in procession in any public calamity, the divine assistance has been invariably received. On one occasion, this blessed Mother spoke clearly and distinctly to the Father.

From Gandia he proceeded to Italy, and through holy obedience he did not defer his entry into the capital, though it was then a time (the dog-days) very dangerous to strangers, even in perfect

health. His infirmity increased so much after his arrival, that he only survived a few days, dying on the 1st of August, 1547, in the 40th year of his age, and the 6th of the Society, by which his loss was severely felt. Indeed all Europe lamented his death. St. Ignatius, though he rejoiced, knowing that his venerable companion only passed from temporal labours to eternal recompences, was profoundly afflicted, because in this Son, whom "he had begotten in Christ," the Society lost, whilst yet in its infancy, a prudent and zealous missionary, whose only end was the glory of God, and the salvation of souls. To console him, our Lord revealed to him that he would give him another Faber, which he did in the person of St. Francis Borgia, then duke of Gandia.

In many places where he had been, great honours were paid to Father Faber's memory when they heard of his decease. Some perceiving already the effects of his prayers, and believing him in heaven, made great rejoicings. The holy rector of Gandia, F. Andrew of Oviedo, who was afterwards made Patriarch of Ethiopia, wrote to Rome, that a person, evidently under the influence of the Holy Ghost, affirmed that Father Faber enjoyed the beatific vision, that his glory was admirable, that he had seen him all full of light and environed with splendour, and that he said many and excellent things on the obedience of Christ, and the incomparable rewards he possessed for having lost his life in the cause of holy obedience. But let us give the testimony of the great St. Francis de Sales to the virtues of this holy man; writing to one of our Fathers, he says:

January 10th, 1612.

REV. FATHER,

It is time indeed, that I return you the holy life of our venerable Father Faber; I was too conscientious to transcribe it, because you spoke of it as a thing yet reserved by the Society. I would like greatly to have a copy of the history of so holy a person, whom I have so many reasons to love; besides, I cannot retain particular details, but only a general recollection of things. I hope the Society may publish this life; though brief, it will abundantly give the cream of devotion and the honey of piety. Good Mr. Faber, the physician here, has lately discovered in a bureau, a letter of his holy namesake, which I have had the happiness to venerate; I have also visited the little chapel in his honour. Continue, Rev. Father, to pray for me, who am your affectionate brother and servant,

Geneva.

FRANCIS B.

ST. IGNATIUS BEFORE THE ALTAR
AT MONTSERRAT.

When St. Ignatius, founder of the holy Society of Jesus, devoted himself to the service of God, he signalized it by hanging up his sword before the altar of our Lady at Montserrat: the following beautiful lines have been written to commemorate the circumstance, and may serve as a suite to the life of his first companion and faithful imitator.

O God ! how beautiful the ways,
How sweet the potent love that wins
Thy chosen children from the pain,
Tho' seeming pleasure, of their sins.
Ignatius there, before thy shrine !
Renowned, if gallant deeds could speak,
And see ! Oh from his melting eye,
The tear-drop trickles down his cheek.

Short time ago, that dauntless eye,
Could glisten o'er a bloody field ;
And hosts, even tho' he stood alone,
Might rouse, but could not make him yield.
And now he weeps !—Lord, 'tis thy voice,
That voice* whose thunder quells the deep,
That voice† which breaks the cedar's pride ;
That voice now makes Ignatius weep.

That voice has whispered to his heart,
And smote its pride with force so sweet ;

* Vox Domini super aquas : Deus Majestatis intonuit.

† Vox Domini Confringentis cedros, &c. &c.

And here, in pilgrim's garb, he comes,
To lay his glory at thy feet.
To make Thee his, and his all Thine,
To change earth's warfare for thine own ;
To conquer by thy word, and bind
A world in triumph to thy throne.

O more than glorious lot of thine
Thou happy man ! well may'st thou yield
That stainless sword, which often proved
Thy valour in the battle field.
Well may'st thou hang it up, to grace
The shrine of Him who gave it might,
A trophy to the God of Hosts,
That mortal never wore in fight.

A holier voice bespeaks thee now,
Than monarch's call, or battle's cry ;
A holier aim shall guide thine arm,
A holier ardour light thine eye.
Go forth !—A world shall hear thy voice,
The shield that's o'er thee is divine,
Thy banner's motto be the name
Of Him whose glory fills that shrine.*

That name—no empty badge—shall stamp
Its impress on a heroic band,
Formed by thyself, to bear its light
To many a dark and distant land.—
The impress of the zeal which took
A name so sweet for man unsought ;
The lasting impress of the Cross,
The price at which that name was bought.

*Jesu-ite, Society of Jesus.

O God!—from out a bursting heart
Hear one poor prayer—'tis all I ask;
Give me, with zeal like his to live
A partner in his glorious task.—
Give then to earth, what earth esteems,
Give others honour, riches, fame;
The treasure *I* desire is Thee,
My badge of honour is *Thy* name.

January 20th, 1837.

LINES ON THE DEATH OF ST.
FRANCIS XAVIER.

Written December 1st, 1838.

“ Being much weakened by his fever, he retired into the vessel, which was the common hospital of the sick, that he might die in poverty. But the tossing of the ship having given him an extraordinary headache, and hindering him from applying himself to God as he desired, he requested on the following day to be again set on shore, which was accordingly done. Being exposed on the sand to a piercing north wind, they through pity removed him to a hut open on all sides.

* * * * *

“ His countenance was serene, and his soul enjoyed a perpetual calm. Sometimes in his delirium he talked of God, at other times, he raised his eyes to heaven, or fixed them on his crucifix; at

length, on the 2nd of December, transported with heavenly joy, he sweetly gave up the ghost."

Life of St. F. X., by F. Bouhours, S. J.

O earth, behold him here!
The light that lit these eyes seems scarcely fled;
His lips still seem as burdened with a prayer,
But, ah! he's dead.

He's dead!—alas, he's dead!
O God! how precious such a death as his!
To Thee how full of praise—to us of dread—
To him of bliss.

Now is his glory's height;
Ne'er did it beam so brilliantly as now:
Never did life shed such a brilliant light
Upon his brow!

Here, on this island strand,
The scene of his last glorious works, he dies!
The ocean, that oft crouched beneath his hand,
Before him lies,

Rolling beneath his feet,
As if in homage it would own his sway;
Kissing where he had trod, as if to greet
His lifeless clay.

Peaceful his sleep to-day;
See Heaven's own calm is beaming thro' his smile,
Lighting, with its mysterious saintly ray
This lonely isle.*

Land of his dying love! †
Land of his fevered dream and calm intent;
Oh! that it had been given thee to prove
That love's extent!

* Sancian

† China.

And orphaned India weep ;
Thou who didst prove him, can thy tears be dried ?
Where wilt thou find a father now, to keep
 Watch by thy side ?

To bear thee on his breast,
To watch thy tottering footsteps lest thou fall,
To lead thee sweetly to thine only rest,
 Thy God and all ?

Lord, India calls for aid !
He too who loved her stands before thy throne,
Pity her for the sake of him who made
 Her griefs his own.

THE EDIFYING LIFE OF MADAME DE ST. BEUVE.

FOUNDRESS OF THE URSULINES AT PARIS.

From the Annals of that holy Institute.

CHAPTER I.

HER BIRTH AND AMIABLE DISPOSITIONS, &c.

THE virtuous Madame Magdalen of St. Beuve, the honour of her sex and the model of the females of her day, was born about the year of our salvation 1562. Her father was John L'Huillier, Lord of Boullencor and president of the Chamber of Accounts at Paris, and her mother was Lady Renée Nicolai, descended from the first families in the kingdom. She had nine brothers and eight sisters, all of whom were provided for suitably to their birth; one alone became a religious. The noble extraction of our Magdalen was the least of her advantages; in her tenderest years, her amiable dispositions, together with her singular beauty, endeared her to all. Her mother, being very prudent and well disposed, diligently sowed in the heart of her daughter, the seeds of every virtue, which brought forth fruit an hundred fold.

Magdalen held all the vices in detestation, particularly that of lying. As she advanced in age, her excellent endowments appeared to more advantage, and her lively turn of mind, sound judgment, affability, and prudence, which were evinc-

ed at every step, gained her many suitors, who all demanded her in marriage. After consulting God, she gave her hand with the consent of her parents to Claude le Roux, Lord of St. Beuve, counselor of the King, being then nineteen years old. Heaven poured its choicest blessings on the new spouses; their union was so perfect, that it seemed nothing but duration was wanting to complete their bliss; when God, holily jealous of the heart of Madame, snatched away her husband. She felt his death most sensibly, but in the height of her grief, even before his interment, recognizing the inconstancy of all things temporal, she resolved never to marry again, and no more to attach herself to one of whom she was liable to be deprived. Her perseverance in this good purpose, notwithstanding the pressing solicitations which she received to the contrary, fully proves that it was not owing to the first impulses of grief, but was the effect of a divine inspiration, as we shall see.

CHAPTER II.

HER CONDUCT IN HER WIDOWHOOD.

MADAME de St. Beuve was only twenty-two years old when she lost her husband. As she had no family, and had conducted her household with great economy, though without departing from what was suitable to her rank, she acquired great esteem, which increased when it was known that she was determined in future to live in the world only to serve God. Her reputation ran so high, that it was said at Paris, it was only necessary to change a letter of her name, to be called, what she was in effect, *The holy Widow*, *Veuve* in French signifying widow.

About this time King Henry IV. entered Paris, after the destruction of the league. Having met Madame St. Beuve in an assembly of ladies, being impelled by her zeal for the Catholic faith, she advanced towards him, being more courageous than the rest, and respectfully said, "That she acknowledged him for her king, but did not suppose that the Count de Brissac, who had put the city in his possession, would ever have proved a traitor." His majesty pardoned this freedom as the effect of her zeal, and replied, "I know you have always been against me; however, I do not love you less." Taking advantage of this courtesy, she solicited the pardon of some persons who had reason to fear the vengeance of the king, and who had taken refuge in her house, which he granted in the kindest manner. He showed on some occasions a great admiration of her virtue.

Her confessor, Father J. Gontery, S. J. having advised her to enter religion, she shut herself up at first in the Abbey of Chelles, and afterwards in that of St. Peter at Rheims, as being more retired. After some years she returned to Paris, where she was more esteemed than ever. When the king met her in the streets, he stopped his carriage to salute her, and even informed himself of her domestic affairs. Having one day asked her what new improvement she had made in her villa, such a one, she replied. "Is it like mine?" said his majesty. "No, sire," said she, "there is as much difference between them as between your majesty and me." She often adroitly raised his mind to the things conducive to his salvation, so that once he said to her, "It is very reasonable that you feel this tender devotion, who have been educated in the true faith; but how can I experience it, brought up as I have been in the errors of Calvinism, and educa-

ted in the profession of arms?" To this she judiciously replied, "If your majesty cannot have the sweetness of devotion, you can have its strength, which will be equally meritorious."

Madame St. Beuve passed in the court and in the city for the wonder of her age; all in her regard conformed to this advice of the Apostle, "Honour widows who are truly widows." She often went to the palace of the Louvre, to authorise her good works by the patronage of the queen, and princesses, and to induce them to perform the same, and was graciously received by their majesties and the whole court. One day that the young duke of Orleans, brother of Lewis 13th, was making a great noise in the queen's chamber, he was quieted only by the appearance of Madame St. Beuve.

Her house was resorted to by all sorts of persons. Some, as Prelates, Lords, Princesses, consulted her on the most important affairs, and the poor resorted to her as their best friend and powerful advocate. They always had access to her; she spoke to them most kindly, and wrote in their favour to her relations and friends, when unable to assist them personally. The greatest princesses delighted in associating with her, and in learning from her to perform heroic deeds. Her horror of slander caused her to avoid the company of such as were not virtuous, and sometimes to abstain totally from innocent diversions.

Madame contributed often to the conversion of heretics, by means of F. Gontery and Doctor Asseline; and a young girl, who had resolved to renounce her wicked course, having prayed her to give her relief and protection, the virtuous widow most liberally provided her with both.

Her confessor, F. Gontery, taught her how to

make meditation and the other exercises of the spiritual life; and that she might join the merit of humiliation to her pious deeds, he sometimes was very severe, and greatly mortified her. Behold an instance. One time, while preaching before the king, having as usual paid little compliment to the effeminacy of a court life, the sermon being ended, his majesty approached Madame, and said, "St. Beuve, tell thy confessor that I entreat him to love and spare me a little, and to whisper his reprimands into my ear always." The first time F. Gontery met her, having asked her if she did not feel a secret satisfaction at this public testimony of the friendship of the king, she acknowledged she did, which drew upon her bitter and humiliating reproaches, but these she bore extremely well. She was most submissive to this guide, did nothing without his approbation, and during the fourteen years she survived him, she continued to follow the plan of conduct he had given her.

CHAPTER III.

MADAME DE ST. BEUVE UNDERTAKES TO ESTABLISH THE FIRST MONASTERY OF THE URSULINES, AND SUCCEEDS.

WISHING to render this chaste widow the mother of so many religious, and to render her the principal instrument of a work so considerable as the establishment of a new order in his church, our Lord inspired her with a great zeal for the honour of his divine Majesty, and the most sanguine desires of contributing thereto. For many years she had these general desires without particularly knowing the divine will. The pious acts which she exercised every day not contenting her,

she opened her mind to her confessor on the matter. Seeing her undetermined, he desired her to recommend all to God, and resign herself entirely to his will. She did so most submissively, and from that time relinquished all that seemed superfluous in her dress and furniture.

Some time after, while conversing with F. Lancelot Marin, master of the Jesuits' noviceship at Paris, she communicated her desires to him, saying, that being incapable of doing much, they only served to torment her, at the same time she asked whether he saw any means of stemming the torrent of iniquity which every day increased, and if she could in any manner contribute thereto. To this, the father replied, "I shall answer your question by a simple comparison with which God just now inspires me. Figure to yourself a very fine apple become rotten, which it is necessary to put in its first state; this cannot be done except by extracting the little seeds and planting them in a good soil, when, after being cultivated properly, they will produce trees, which will bear as beautiful apples as the parent stock. Thus, it seems to me, that to renew the corrupt world, it is necessary to begin with the young. Our Father, St. Ignatius, thought so, and hence he destined our Society for the instruction of little boys. It would be a most laudable enterprise to establish the like in Paris for the education of little girls. Transplanted from the bad soil of the world, and cultivated by pious instruction, they would go forth, as from a nursery, to bear in their families the fruits of virtue. Well regulated families would reform cities and provinces, and in a short time the world would be renewed, at least, poor Catholics would not live in ignorance, which is the cause of so many vices."

This discourse beamed such light on the mind of the pious widow, that she immediately thought of her future foundation, and soon after set to execute it, our Lord having supplied her with the means. Just then, Madame Acarie, since the B. Mother of the Incarnation, was labouring to establish the Carmelites in Paris; and when, out of the number of young women whom she collected, she had selected such as were most proper for that institute, she employed them in teaching little girls gratuitously. Foreseeing the good that an order instituted for this end would operate in the Christian world, she had no rest until she spoke of it to Madame St. Beuve, who was her near relation, and prevailed on her to become the Foundress. Provided they became religious, the latter acceded, but all was to be kept secret until matters were disposed. In the mean time, having consulted many wise and holy persons, they approved the design, and Madame St. Beuve devoted herself to it so earnestly, that she provided a lodging near the place destined for the monastery, which was situate in the Fauxbourg of St. James, and expended immense sums in enlarging the building which the daughters of St. Ursula inhabited. This order, which was established in Italy by St. Angela anno 1537, was not at first erected into a religious congregation, the members of it contenting themselves with simple vows without being obliged to inclosure; but St. Charles Borromeo, who greatly favoured it, procured its confirmation of Gregory 13th in 1572. Several houses of the order were already established in Italy before it extended to France. Still they were not cloistered nuns until Madame de St. Beuve's time. When the convent above alluded to was enlarged, she had her little colony to take possession. Twelve

chosen from amongst them to be the foundresses of this holy institute, received the habit on the 11th November, feast of St. Martin, 1611, that day being the anniversary of the first convent, and the birth-day of the holy institute of St. Ursula.

The pious foundress in time greatly enlarged the edifice. Besides providing for it out of her own patrimony, she procured large sums for that purpose from the princesses of her acquaintance, whom she often introduced into the monastery. She managed all things so prudently, that the house flourished and gave wonderful edification; it was now seen that the Ursulines were fitly denominated the mothers of christianity, the mistresses of the faith, the imitators of the Apostles, the co-helpers of the doctors, the disciples of the Incarnate wisdom, and the visible angels of female youth.

Anxious that this first monastery might be imbued with the true spirit of the institute, and thus communicate it to so many others, Madame St. Beuve, after consulting the Superiors, selected the Jesuit fathers from all others as its directors and spiritual guides. The end of both orders being so much alike, she knew they were better qualified to superintend the Ursulines.

The first sisters having spent their two years' noviceship, made their solemn profession on the feast of the Presentation of the glorious Virgin Mary. Three weeks after the vigil of the Immaculate Conception of the blessed Mother of God, to whom the monastery was dedicated, she manifested her protection in the most signal manner. While the Community were at matins, a novice was taken so ill, that they were obliged to send at once for a physician. On arriving at the gate, he wrote a billet, which, having presented to the

portress, it was found that six robbers had plotted to enter the monastery during the night. The foundress being informed of it, sent at once to the Queen mother, who having ordered a guard during the night, some of the robbers were taken, and the rest put to flight, so that the nuns were left in security; and the terrors of the night were converted into the rejoicings of the morning, particularly, as the novice's malady disappeared the moment the physician entered.

Because of the great good resulting from this establishment, the devil employed many other artifices against it, even before it was completed. He caused some to enter there, with the most pernicious designs. Among others a novice, whose bad conduct caused her to be dismissed, said in going out, that the devil had supplied her with a certain ingredient to poison the religious; but that contrary to custom, she had been prevented on the appointed day to serve in the kitchen, and thus the diabolical design was frustrated. It would be impossible to detail the many stratagems employed by the enemy of all good to disturb this monastery, and those who supported it, particularly the Foundress; but being the work of God, it triumphed over his wicked efforts, and became a nursery of saints.

As holy souls, forgetting their first good works, always desire to do more for God, Madame St. Beuve considering that impiety was always on the increase, resolved after a strong inspiration to erect a second chapel in the convent, where her religious would in perpetuity honour God, the Blessed Virgin, and the Saints, in reparation of the insults they received in the world. To render the place more venerable, she procured quantities of pious relics, which was very easy, because of

the esteem in which she was held. The authentication of them may be still seen in the archives of the chapel. The reigning Queen, Anne of Austria, gave her a little bone of St. Anne, enchased in gold and vermillion, and Queen Mary of Medicis presented her with a little relic of the crown of thorns, which she had received from the royal chapel at Paris. These two princesses conferred on her many marks of friendship, and gave her an audience when all others were denied. The pious widow caused it to redound to the glory of God. She obtained from the bishop of Paris, a permission for her religious to celebrate a festival annually, in honour of all the Saints, especially those whose relics they possessed, without speaking of the daily Saluts, and particular devotions, continued ever since—this place being, after the holy tabernacle, the constant resource of the religious. The holy foundress found there her paradise, and continued near the door in prayer for hours together.

CHAPTER IV.

SHE PROCURES TWO OTHER FOUNDATIONS, &c.

AMONG all other religious orders, Madame was particularly attached to the Jesuits, because their end is the salvation of souls. She preserved a list of all those of the Society who came to Paris, and if they failed to visit her, she reproached them in her own amiable manner. In their holy intercourse, she drew her sentiments of devotion. F. Surin, who was the first that proposed to her the institution of the Ursulines, some time after intimated to her that the novices of the Society were greatly inconvenienced in the Professed

house of Paris, and that a separate establishment was necessary for them. I believe, Mademoiselle, said he, in conclusion, that God will serve himself of you, to provide us a noviceship. I would esteem myself very happy, Father, replied she, to be useful to so holy a company, and thenceforward she laboured to accomplish his desire. But all her efforts were ineffectual, until the following incident took place. F. Gontery having preached the Advent of 1609, in the parish of St. Gervais, the king and all his court heard him on Christmas day. The sermon was particularly fine, so that all Paris was in admiration, above all M. du Tillet baron de La Bussiere; for Madame St. Beuve being to visit him a few days after, he spoke in the highest terms of the preacher, and knowing that she was interested for him, offered to serve him in any manner, and begged her to tell him how he could make himself useful to the Father. Madame felt at once that the hour was come for the establishment of the Jesuit's noviceship; so having told M. du Tillet that F. Gontery desired nothing for himself, but that a way of obliging him was to found a house of the Society, where religious might be trained one day to become Jesuit Fathers, he on the spot took measures for its establishment, on this condition only; that his name should not be mentioned, that it might be in that quarter of Paris which he liked, and that she should be named the foundress. For some time they piously debated on this last condition, but Madame was at length obliged to accede.

After having acquainted Father Gontery with the pleasing news, she sought a building suited to her design, and prayed our Lord to manifest where He would be served. After seeing several places, she at length came to the Hostel de Mezieres, in

the Fauxbourg of St. Germain, which contained a house and garden, with a very large stable. In regarding the latter, she said, I think our Lord wishes to be served here; He choose to be born in a stable. The house being purchased, the fathers took possession of it the 25th of March, 1610, at the request of Madame, because of her devotion to the Incarnation of the Son of God; to which mystery the little chapel of the house at her desire was in some manner dedicated, until the church should be built. She always continued her liberalities towards the Fathers, furnishing the church and sacristy, and providing them with other necessities.

Madame St. Beuve also founded the Ursulines of the street St. Avoye, in Paris, in union with the first convent; and not to yield to any person in greatness of soul, no more than in virtue, she gave up her right of foundress to her niece, Madame Gabriel de Choutarenne, spouse of M. Feydean. She conducted to this new house four professed Religious of the Fauxbourg of St. James, as she afterwards led those who founded the monasteries of Pontoise and St. Denys, to which establishments she contributed as much as possible by her cares and charity.

Although this amiable widow had always passed for most holy, it was principally since her first foundation that her virtues appeared with most lustre. Her reputation increased in a corner of a Fauxbourg, in proportion as she thought of increasing the glory of God. When Urban the 8th sent his nephew into France in quality of legate, he commanded him to visit on his part Madame St. Beuve. She received him in her little retreat with great respect, and procured his blessing for her dear Ursulines.

But she preferred the favour of heaven to that of earth, and knew as well how to render her homage to God, as her duty to man. At prayer her countenance was so amiable, that it inspired all who gazed on it with devotion.

One All Saints' night, while praying in her chamber for the souls of the deceased, having several times reproved her waiting-woman for praying in a negligent posture near the fire, she perceived her to receive a stroke from an invisible hand, which she felt so much that she needed no farther reprehension.

Madame every day recited the little office of our blessed Lady, and had regular hours for her mental and vocal prayers. She often made use of pious ejaculations, but not being able to retain continually the actual presence of God, she made use of pious convocations with him. Among others she promised our Lord, after Communion, that every time she drew a grain from a bracelet of seven grains which she wore on her arm, she meant to form a distinct act of each of the seven principal virtues.

On every side of the little oratory in which she retired, she caused to be written pious aspirations from the holy scripture; that wherever she cast her eyes, she might conceive good thoughts. She often said, that while the monastery was building, she prayed in its different apartments that God might never be offended in them.

We cannot describe her respect for holy things; the least ceremonies of the church, the words of holy scripture, and all that regarded the worship of God, held a high place in her estimation. She could not bear to see them treated with little respect. Having learned that the gardener of the convent had sown some seed in an oratory, which

she had caused to be built in the garden, on the model of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem, she was afflicted even to tears, and obtained of the Superior that a procession might be made, to repair the irreverence. At the top of this oratory is a grotto in honour of St. Magdalen, which furnishes a further proof of the liberality of the pious foundress; who caused it to be ornamented, and procured for it a representation in stone-work of her illustrious patroness. But these are but few of her works; we shall see more and wonderful things in the following chapter.

CHAPTER V.

THE VIRTUES OF MADAME ST. BEUVE.

THE pious widow regarding the religious as the spouses of Christ, entertained for them the greatest respect. Hence, if she had a word to say to the Community, she was seized with a sort of trembling, which astonished her so, that she used to say to them, I can easily speak to you in particular, and regard you all as my daughters; but when I behold you assembled, you all seem so many angels, and I feel an awe that I never experienced before the great of the world; I could speak with more assurance to the senate, than to your community. She lived in perfect intelligence with the superioresses, paid them great deference, and never passed before them.

She never interfered with the chapter affairs of the religious, though solicited by many; knowing well that the privileges of a foundress are only granted to uphold a monastery, and not to trouble it by an unjust usurpation of authority.

She was very solicitous for the maintenance of good order, and endeavoured to preserve it. Thus, she never asked permission for more than two persons to enter together, that she might keep them with her, lest they might go and hinder the religious in their observances. She caused her nuns to form acquaintance with some religious of eminent sanctity, by whom they might be edified; such as Madame de Beauvillier, Abbess of Montmartre, and Madame de Gondy, Abbess of Poissy.

For some time Madame St. Beuve lodged in the Ursuline enclosure, going out when she pleased to visit such relatives as were not content with seeing her at the grate; but as she perceived that by going out often she might inconvenience the monastery, she left it at the expiration of a year, and took up her abode in a house contiguous, having a parlour towards the nuns' quarter, and a door through which she entered the convent; dining almost every Sunday and festival in the refectory, and spending the recreation with her dear daughters till the bell tolled, when she retired until the Vespers hour, at which she attended and chaunted in choir. When they came to this verse of the 112th Psalm, *Qui habitare facit sterilem in domo matrem filiorum lætantem*, who maketh the barren to dwell in her house a joyful mother of children, she felt so great spiritual joy that she could not dissemble it. She used to say, that these words sensibly touched her, seeing that the number of her spiritual children, which every day increased, would in time become innumerable.

Her discourse was so pious, and her manners so amiable, that she seemed to have the key to all hearts, and to be able to make herself feared or loved as she pleased. She cherished a parti-

cular tenderness for her eldest daughters, the religious of the Fauxbourg of St. James: She carried them all in her heart, and quitted her own affairs, and even her repasts, to give satisfaction even to the novices. Though she had a particular inclination for such nuns as were most useful in the monastery, nevertheless, all received from her marks of kindness and affability. Learning that a poor sick sister suffered some inconvenience in a room in which she had been put, she immediately gave her her own for it, though it was most wretched. As a tender mother, she bewailed all the evils of her children; even in the mortifications necessary to form them to religion, they experienced the tenderness of her heart.

Even by nature she was disposed for the designs of God in her regard, having a great tenderness for children. She delighted in conversing with them, and gave excellent advices to the Ursulines for their education, as to inspire them with a great reverence at prayer, a love of modesty and truth, recommending them particularly not to tolerate lying, never to say things to them differently from what they were, and never to treat them roughly in their simplicities and childish discourse, but to lead them mildly to reason. How will you form their minds, she would say, if you deprive them of the liberty of declaring their ideas? She never suffered that her relations, who were in the class, should be privileged beyond the other pensioners, and often joyfully exercised the functions of an Ursuline, teaching the children to read, to sew, to sing, while the nuns were engaged. She testified so much kindness for them, that the whole class loved her, and endeavoured to please her by assuming, the moment they saw her, that deportment which she recommended.

She was not less cherished by the little extern scholars, who were already near two hundred in number. Sometimes she visited them, and showed them to her friends as her most precious jewels. One time, having led Father Gontery to the door near which they passed processionally, and asked him what he thought of the services rendered to so great a number of poor children; he replied, quite amazed, that much virtue was necessary to continue the labour attached to it. "Father," said the pious widow, "I hope that God will always provide subjects fit for the institute; and it is my wish that those most poor in the goods of fortune, may be preferred to the rich and noble, provided they have a better vocation, and more virtue and talent to serve the order."

To speak of her immense liberalities to the poor, it is quite enough to use this expression, which she frequently repeated, that she *could not bear money or sadness*. But we shall detail some instances of her charity during the last twenty years of her life. Having charged some persons in the Fauxbourg to notice her of the wants and necessities of those who dwelt there, she was one day apprised that a poor soldier lay at extremity. After having sent him relief, and procured his reception of the sacraments, she continued to inquire after him, but was always told he was still at the point of death. It immediately struck her that he would not continue to languish if he had not been ill through want, and thereupon she sent him her own supper, which was then prepared, and continued to supply him with good nourishment, which finally restored him, so that he was able in some time to come and thank his protectress. She often served others in a similar manner.

She portioned many poor girls who were in danger of losing their virtue, giving to some twenty crowns, to others more or less according to their necessity, or the money which she might have, for often she drained her purse, so that she was obliged to seek something else rather than dismiss them empty. One night she gave one of her silver trinkets to a poor person; another time, touched with compassion for a poor artisan reduced to beggary, she solicited a person in his favour, and obtained for him an alms of one hundred crowns. Having sent for him, she inquired if he was attentive to his religious duties, to which he replied that he was, whatever happened. "Well, my good friend," said she, "since you fear God, behold what he sends you, you see how he loves those who serve him." The poor man could scarcely believe her until she put the money into his hands, so great was his amazement. Another time, having seen a young boy endeavouring to gain his livelihood in serving a tradesman, she asked him if he wished to work; and having employed him in the monastery, he succeeded so well that he became a master mason, and had the principal care of the building. In time, he became one of the most skilled in his trade at Paris, and was never weary in extolling his benefactress.

In the winter she sent fuel as well as covering to poor families. She even provided shrouding for the dead. To conclude this point, we shall give her own testimony, that the greatest content she felt on awaking in the morning was, to know that she had something that day to bestow.

To enable herself to be liberal, and to conform more perfectly to Him who, *being rich, made Himself poor for us*, she retrenched all her superflui-

ties. When commencing the foundation of the Ursulines, she sold all her plate except a dish, a plate, and some spoons, as also her valuable tapestries, and other rich moveables, and no longer clothed herself but with linen, which she herself sometimes spun. Some time after she sold her carriage, and dismissed most of her servants, after having liberally recompensed them.

This *strong woman*, according to the scripture phrase, *eat not her bread in idleness*; she always usefully employed herself, generally in some work for the service of the altar. When she could no longer labour at these works, she employed a poor girl expressly for embroidering, that she might have wherewith to bestow the temples of the Lord.

Our Lord, wishing that a little portion of his humiliations should be mingled with the honours she received from all parts, permitted that a beggar, to whom she was most bountiful, should say very injurious things of her; this ingratitude sensibly affected her, but she bore it in silence, and still continued her charities.

She could not bear to be called *madame*, the term seemed to her too honourable; and her humility caused her to burn, two years before her death, a paper on which she had written her good sentiments, and something of her interior, notwithstanding the entreaties of the Ursulines. She said if she had not destroyed them during life, they would be for her a subject of temptation at the hour of death.

She kindly saluted persons of humble birth, and entertained a close friendship with them, provided they were virtuous. She was very reserved in speaking of herself, and remained unmoved amidst the plaudits bestowed on her. A religious

having asked her if she had not formerly had some complaisance because of her beauty, she candidly confessed that she never had, except one night, after having spent the afternoon in company with a very deformed lady, she saw in her looking-glass how much handsomer she was, which caused her some vain joy. She would never suffer her likeness to be taken, but the Ursulines caused it to be done after her death.

Her modesty was evident in her whole conduct, and her sincerity and zeal in defending the truth was evinced on all occasions. Queen Anne of Austria, when very young, being once in the convent when a certain princess demanded entrance, and wishing she might be denied, told the superior to say the key was lost. But the good foundress, who was present, said at once with a holy and generous liberty, let your majesty remember, if she pleases, that for any reason whatsoever it is not lawful to tell the smallest untruth. This little remonstrance edified the queen and all her suite.

Madame St. Beuve rarely dined abroad. Since she established the Ursulines she generally eat alone in her little dwelling, and once chanced to tell the Ursulines that she did not remember having ever ordered what they would prepare for her repasts, nor found fault with what was presented to her. This alone is sufficient to convince us of the perfection of her virtue; we shall see how it was rewarded in the following chapter.

CHAPTER VI.

DEATH OF MADAME ST. BEUVE.

THE principal earthly advantage enjoyed by Madame St. Beuve, was a state of perfect health; though extremely sensible of it, she nevertheless prepared for death as she advanced in age, and that little indispositions noticed her of her end. For six months these greatly increased; they gave her quantities of remedies, which seemed effectual, when suddenly, on the 25th August, a dropsy took place, to the amazement of all. The physicians informed the Ursulines of her danger, and continued to attend her. Her malady increasing, she sent to beg their prayers, particularly the lay sisters, and they, greatly afflicted, besides the devotions which were said in common, went in turn to pray before the Holy Sacrament, which was exposed for this end, on the feast of St. Augustine from six o'clock in the morning till seven at night. She then seemed better, but at ten o'clock she became so ill that the physician said it was time for her to get the holy viaticum. Whereupon, being asked if it might be deferred till to-morrow, he recommended not to wait a moment. Then re-collecting all her strength, she begged them to go and bring her the Holy Sacrament, which was administered by the vicar of St. James. F. Jerome Lallemand, S. J., having been sent for, asked her what he could do for her, to which she replied, "Offer me to God, and my death also, in union with the precious death and passion of his dear Son." She afterwards testified her devotion to St. Ignatius of Loyola, and having received the extreme unction with great sentiments of devotion, signed her last will with as great presence of mind as if she had been in perfect health.

The monastery was strangely alarmed on learning about midnight that its dearly beloved foundress drew near her end. The superior having sent to know what she and her religious could do for her, the holy invalid wept so with tenderness, that she could only testify she was at death what she had been during life. F. Lallemand endeavoured sweetly to raise her mind to God, and observing the good order she had put to her affairs, said, Let us thank God, Mademoiselle, for having fortified you with the holy Sacraments before he called you to himself, by the Gloria Patri, &c. Some time after, he asked her if things went well between her and God. *Yes, Father,* she replied. These were her last words. Having received the last benediction, she sweetly passed to our Lord, while the father recited the Psalm 121, *Lætatus sum in his, &c.*, at two o'clock in the morning of Thursday, 29th August, 1630, aged 68 years, while her dear Ursulines were saying in choir the prayers of the agonising for her intention. She was interred with great solemnity in the middle of their great choir under a marble slab.

LIFE OF FATHER BALTHASAR ALVAREZ,
OF THE SOCIETY OF JESUS.

CHAPTER I.

FATHER Balthasar Alvarez was born at Cervera in Spain, in the year of our salvation 1533, of Antonio Alvarez and Catharine Manrique, both of noble extraction. From his infancy he gave signs of that spirit of piety which animated him through life, his ordinary amusement being to decorate altars, make little crosses, and the like. Having acquired at home the first rudiments of learning, he was sent to complete his education at Alcala. After graduating as master of arts in that university, he read theology for two years, and with great applause. At this period God planted in his soul the seeds of virtue, to produce fruit in due time for the good of many. By the communication he had with a great servant of God, he began to give himself to prayer, and finding in this holy exercise a great spiritual gust, he devoted to it a considerable portion of his time, to the great profit of his soul. Spiritual reading also was productive in him of immense fruit. During the last four years of his studies, he conceived a great desire to enter into the Society of Jesus, as being an institute in which he could serve God with most security and perfection; but he was held back from gratifying it by the apprehension of displeasing his parents, who signified to him in their letters, that being now in the de-

cline of life, they expected he would take charge of his little sisters. However, the divine light beaming on his soul, soon discovered to him, that his obligations to his heavenly Father were much stronger than any towards his earthly parents, and he began to hope that God, for whose sake he abandoned them, would abundantly provide for his sisters. He did not as yet, determine what institute to embrace. He felt much inclined to the Carthusian, as being more conformed to his turn for solitude and mortification, but having consulted some pious persons, particularly one, a relative of his own, he resolved on entering the Society of Jesus. Nor was he sorry for having followed their counsel; on the contrary, he felt so satisfied, that passing once near the quarter in which one of them lived, he went ten leagues out of his way to visit him.

He entered the Society in the year 1555, and on the feast of the Invention of the Holy Cross, which prognosticated his love for the sacred instrument of redemption, and the zeal with which he would unfold its treasures to men. He was then in his 22nd year. The superiors sent him to Samancas, the noviceship of the provinces of Toledo and Castile. The fervour of the novices assembled there from various parts was extremely warm, because their hearts being prepared, the Holy Ghost filled them with the new wine fit for the conservation of the infant institute. Balthasar endeavoured to be to all a model of zeal and regularity, lest discipline should be relaxed by his example, and even then, signalised himself for that spirit of penance and prayer which he evinced through life, and endeavoured to advance with rapid strides in the way of perfection. A good beginning almost guarantees a happy end;

hence, Father Balthasar used to say afterwards to the novices from his own experience, "Take heed, dear brethren, how you advance now; your progress in religion depends on your fervour in the noviceship. If now you be tepid and negligent, you will hereafter be careless and immortified; but if zealous for your advancement, you will easier persevere to the end."

Balthasar being appointed to serve Fathers Francis Borgia and Anthony Araoz, greatly edified them by his modesty and humility, while they profited him exceedingly by their great lights. He did not long enjoy this advantage, for a cook being wanted in another house, he was sent thither to discharge that office. He gave great satisfaction in this employ; indeed, it greatly pleased him, because he regarded the meanest office in religion, great and honourable before God. Hence, he evinced no anxiety to be released from it, until his superiors, judging him greatly advanced, withdrew him from the noviceship to prosecute his studies, during which he continually progressed in the ways of God, as we shall now show.

CHAPTER II.

VIRTUES OF FATHER BALTHASAR.

FATHER Balthasar, among other good dispositions, felt so strong an attractive for the holy exercise of prayer, that it was necessary to moderate it. Not content with spending therein the time allotted by the constitutions, he sometimes devoted to it the greater part of the night. He every year spent fifteen days in retreat, during which he performed the exercises of St. Ignatius; every

month he devoted a day, and every week a morning, to treat more particularly with God. He advanced with all possible humility in the way of prayer, not seeking any degree of it than that to which he was raised by God, knowing that it is presumptuous in the extreme to attempt to *kiss the mouth of the spouse* without having first *embraced His feet*. He faithfully walked in the three states of the spiritual life, the purgative, the illuminative, and unitive. In the purgative, the end of which is the purification of the soul and the mortification of the passions, he took care to make every day the general and particular examen. He greatly esteemed the latter; he said it was a sort of practical prayer, by which a person attained that knowledge of self which is the principle of humility of soul and purity of heart, two requisites for acquiring familiarity with God. He also made an examen of his meditation, both to correct the faults committed and conserve the good sentiments therein conceived, and he kept a little book, in which he noted any point or sentiment which greatly moved him, with the day, month, and year in which it occurred. He says, that these were so many sparks which inflamed when he waxed cold, and that they greatly animated him when he anew revolved them in his memory.

During the day he endeavoured to conserve the good sentiments conceived in his morning meditation; indeed, our Lord did not fail to continue them. This Father Balthasar acknowledges in his little book, where he says, that as courtiers, after rendering some pleasing service to their prince, are sometimes rewarded with an extraordinary treat; so when a person strives to entertain our Lord *well* in his prayer, he is favoured during

the day with new and more excellent sentiments of holy things in great abundance.

Father Balthasar had a great relish for the words which are recorded by the evangelists to have been spoken by our Lord, because of the great devotion he felt towards the sacred Humanity. He diligently prepared to celebrate all his festivals, and received in return great lights and graces on these holy days. He had a singular devotion to the Passion, and seldom lost sight of it. Being asked about this period, what his manner of prayer was, he replied, that on commencing, he kissed the feet of Christ crucified, and reflected on the virtues which He preaches from the cross, which produced in him desires to mortify himself, to love his neighbour, and assist poor souls. From his experience of its utility, he counselled all who began prayer to apply themselves to the Passion, and used often say, "Let us not think we do any thing, so long as we have not Christ crucified engraven in our souls." He often fixed his eyes almost involuntarily on a crucifix, which he kept in his chamber, and thence, as he acknowledged to some holy persons, obtained great lights; being sometimes, as it were, transported out of himself, and absorbed in that abyss of charity, entering by the gates of his sacred wounds, and lost in the consideration of the poverty, humiliation, and sufferings of his blessed Lord.

He was sometimes favoured with ecstasies. One day at Medina del Campo, a father having entered his chamber, found him on his knees at prayer, while a marvellous splendour, indicative of his interior lights, beamed from his countenance. Another time, a brother found him so absorbed in God, that he entered and departed from his room unperceived. A single glance at a

crucifix one day while studying at Salamanca, transported him quite out of himself. When sick he frequently had raptures, which the infirmarians mistaking for fainting fits, endeavoured by cordials to restore him, but without effect. He obtained great graces by means of prayer; our Lord treated him most liberally, and even testified how much he desired to be solicited by him. One time having made but one only petition, he heard a voice interiorly, which said, "*Thou art as sparing in thy demands, as God is liberal in his bequests; ask for the relief of all thy necessities.*" Another time our Lord promised to help him as King, and indeed, He so punctually fulfilled His engagement, that His servant received the effect of his petition before he rose from his prayer. One time seeing a person in danger of being killed, the horses having run off with the vehicle in which she rode, he recommended her to God, and the animals suddenly stopped, to the joy and amazement of all who beheld them.

It is no wonder that Balthasar was a man of prayer, since he was most faithful in the practice of mortification: he endeavoured to die wholly to nature, saying, that as the martyrs by a painful death attain a blessed life, so do the other servants of God by the practice of abnegation; and that it was not alone sufficient to carry the cross, but we should also die on it. With sentiments like these, he entered on his practice of mortification, first turning his arms against his natural dispositions, which were extremely harsh and severe towards others, and succeeded so well that he seemed to be all sweetness and gentleness. He so mortified his affection towards friends, that it would seem he had not one in existence. He was never heard to speak of them, nor meddle in

their affairs, nor even visit them, except once in obedience to his superiors. He much desired never to receive any favour from his friends, that he might be less obliged to communicate with them. He used to say, that a religious person ought to be like another Melchisedec, without parent or friend who might prejudice his liberty.

To the mortification of the passions, Father Balthasar joined that of the body and the senses. When in Rome which abounds with religious curiosities, he remained in prayer before the relics of the Saints, while his companions went to visit them. One feast of the Holy Sacrament, he was observed to hold his eyes fixed on the Sacred Host, without once looking at the procession, which was magnificent in the extreme. Being once at a meeting to the proceedings of which he could not attend without looking at some ladies, who were in the next tribune, he drew in his mind an image of the holy Virgin, and entertained himself with her so closely, during the seven hours the meeting lasted, that he knew no more of what passed, than if he had not been present. If at table he was served with any choice meat, he took care to give it to the person who sat next, when it could be done without being observed. He used often to take hard dry bread instead of fresh, and contrived when sick to eat whatever they gave him, however repugnant to his inclination. He swallowed the bitterest medicine slowly, and as it were drop by drop, and all this as secretly as possible.

He was very averse to perfumes—he would not suffer them, except in the church or the chamber of an invalid. When Superior, he swept the filthiest places and chose the most inconvenient cell. At Avila, his room was so low that he could

not stand upright, and for want of a table he was obliged to keep his Breviary and a few books on a shelf. He never chose a convenient seat, even when his bad health seemed to require it.

It was his opinion that when sufferings fail, a person should supply them by voluntary penances. The maxim of St. Ignatius, that a person advances in prayer in proportion as he advances in mortification was his rule. In corporal austerities, so faithfully practised by the fathers of the society, he surpassed all; being almost always superior, he took advantage of his liberty to treat himself with more severity. His disciplines were rigorous enough to make one tremble; it was necessary that the provincial should interfere, or he would have destroyed his health.

But this did not prevent him from pursuing the mortification of the interior. He often relinquished the sweets which he experienced in prayer to serve the neighbour; fearing it was his own satisfaction he sought in this holy exercise, he applied less to it and more to the gaining souls to God. Recollecting that St. Paul considers many as *enemies to the cross of Christ*, he thus said in himself, Henceforward I shall not, Lord, seek my own inclinations, however good; but rather your blessed will. To console your apostle, I shall rather do what pleases you than what gratifies myself; your will is preferable to all consolations. Another time meditating on these words of St. John, "*There stood by the cross of Jesus his mother and his mother's sister,*" he thus spoke: It was a point of honour with the friends of Christ to be near him on the cross, and this proceeded from his Holy Spirit. "He is on the cross, and his mother and all the just are with him: there are none but

sinners absent, for, as David says, *salvation is far from them.*

This love for the cross inspired him with a great desire to be disengaged from all. A certain father, who enjoyed a great share of his confidence, having one day observed him more pensive than usual, like a person anxious for something, asked him the cause, to whom he replied, "I am trying to disengage myself as perfectly from creatures as if I were alone and abandoned in the deserts of Africa.

Father Balthasar was a great friend to holy poverty, firmly believing that all religious perfection consisted therein. "Let no one deceive himself," he used to say, "by spiritual delights and pious sentiments, unless he swallow cheerfully the bitter phial of evangelical poverty, unless he welcome its companions, hunger, thirst, cold, ignominy, and opprobrium. A person who seeks a nice habit and rejects an inferior one, is not a true religious—one who knows not how to suffer thirst, but runs to extinguish it the moment it is felt—one who endeavours that nothing may be wanting to him, has not the spirit of poverty.

In this sentiment, Father Balthasar selected for himself the worst of every thing. He even extended his love of poverty to the vestments which were appropriated to his use. It was his desire that necessaries even should be wanting to him, and not only abstained from asking favours, but even refused those which were proffered, partly to preserve the spirit of poverty, and partly not to lose his liberty. He was never seen to wear any thing new; he took care even that his shoes should be first worn by some brother until they ceased to appear new. He wrote his sermons on old papers. In the same spirit, one time that

he wanted a certain book during some days, he preferred going for it to the library rather than retain it in his cell. In this he had nothing but a stool or a rush chair without a back. When visited by some great person, as was often the case, he used to say cheerfully, "Sit down, my lord, in the house of poverty you must expect poor accommodations." Once he was sent a present of a chair covered with velvet; he immediately sent it to the kitchen, where it remained until it was spoiled, to teach the novices, who occasionally assisted the cook, to despise what was so vain in itself, though esteemed by worldlings. He was averse to wearing relics, images, Agnus Dei, because the heart sometimes becomes attached to them, when it should seek its consolation in God alone, and not in the things which lead to him. He affirmed that those who love poverty, were disposed for the divine communications.

He was also endowed with a great love for and confidence in God; "*nothing is wanting to him who loves,*" said he. His chastity was truly angelical. He acknowledged he had received from God exemption from sensual movements. He was once openly assailed, like another Joseph, and gained even a more splendid victory than the patriarch, for he converted the person made use of by the devil to effect his ruin. No way elated with his victory, he continued to avoid dangerous occasions, and diffide in his own strength. He never conversed with persons of the other sex; he was more on his guard even with such pious women as he directed, saying, that as good wine may be changed into sour vinegar, so spiritual friendships may become extremely dangerous. He strenuously recommended religious modesty, the transgression of its minutest rules was insup-

portable to him. We shall now see how fervent he was in the discharge of his religious and ministerial functions.

CHAPTER III.

HIS GREAT DEVOTION, PARTICULARLY AT HOLY MASS.

FATHER Balthasar's devotion caused him for many years to say his office on bended knees. When no longer able, by reason of his infirmities, he chose a retired place and there performed it, seated with as much exterior reverence as interior devotion. To awaken his attention, he used to call to mind with what respect the angels appear in the divine presence, and on his remoteness from their dispositions. He preferred reciting his office without a companion, that he might taste more at leisure the holy sentiments communicated to him; it is extraordinary how many excellent ideas he drew from a little verse of the psalms. He was very punctual in adhering to the least part of the ceremonial, as kneeling, crossing himself. Our Lord gave him to understand, that when he formed the sign of the cross, the three divine Persons conferred on him their benediction.

But his devotion at holy mass was even more extraordinary. He prepared for it diligently, making frequent examens of conscience, and spending some time in recollecting himself before he went to the altar. No matter how numerous his occupations, or fatiguing his journeys, he never failed to offer the divine Sacrifice every day, and with such devotion as edified all the assistants. One of our Society said that he owed his vocation to the fervour and devotion he observed in Father Balthasar during Mass, and

while performing his part in the ceremonies of Holy Week. St. Teresa, an unobjectionable witness, affirms, that one day during Mass she saw a resplendent crown suspended over this Father's head, indicative of the great devotion which then animated him. He often celebrated privately, being longer or shorter in proportion to the graces which God then conferred on him. Indeed, these were very numerous; hence he longed for the hour of sacrifice. The angels of those whom he directed often revealed to him during Mass what was necessary to be known regarding them. St. Teresa says, that the holy Sacrament was the Sun, by whose light he was enabled to penetrate the wonders that passed within her. It is not to be wondered that the angels, who are ever before the throne of the love of Jesus, as well as that of his glory, should have a singular predilection for this holy man, seeing the devotion with which he officiated. On his side he was very devout to these blessed spirits, particularly him of whom it is said in the canon of the Mass, *Jube hæc perferri per manus sancti Angeli*; "Command these things to be carried to Thee by the hands of the holy angel."

Father Balthasar devoted a long time to his thanksgiving after Mass: he made it with great devotion. Then it was that the divine light beamed more resplendently on his understanding, and warmer affections inflamed his will. In proof of this we select the following passages from his writings.

"After concluding Mass on the feast of the Epiphany," writes he, "while I longed to share in the happiness of the Magi, I heard a voice say to me interiorly, Sure, they only adored Jesus, and thou hast received him." Another time it occurred to

me during Mass, that if the rich seek God, it is truly wonderful; because the idols must be destroyed in their hearts before the ark be exalted. Ambition must be destroyed in the great, sensuality in the rich, pride in the learned. Woe to those who reject, like the Philistines, the ark of the Lord, saying, We will not have it, because it holds the hand heavy and the yoke over us.

Another time I thought, that if the life of the soul suffices for itself and the body, with how much more reason should the life of Christ animate him, into whose soul he enters by holy communion. It is in this the saying of our Lord is accomplished, "As I live by the Father, thus he who eats me shall live by me." Hence the soul may say after communion, Thy life, thy power, thy riches, thy sanctity suffice to me, Lord. As a little leaven cements a whole mass, so thy divine properties insinuate themselves into the soul who worthily receives thee. I see evidently, said he on another occasion, that the reason many are so tepid after communion is, because they set little value on it, except accompanied by sensible sweetness, which gratifies their self-love. If they say it is to please our Lord, they desire these tendernesses. I reply, that they betray great ignorance in desiring to please him by any other means than those which He gives, and that they ought rather to arm themselves with patience, and leave all things to His Providence. A person is greatly deceived in placing the fruit of a good communion in devout sentiments only. Surely, when Jesus comes in his Sacrament, he does not leave at home His gifts or graces, His power or His mercy. He is always and in all places God, and, consequently, infinite perfection. Whosoever possesses Him possesses all things; and if we will taste his

sweetness we must be disengaged from every desire, every affection, save Him alone; then will be fulfilled this saying of David, "The Lord hath satiated the empty soul, and filled with good things the empty soul."

Father Balthasar received so many graces and lights after communion, that he exhorted priests and all who approach the holy table, to make their thanksgiving as long as possible, to turn to the best account the time our Lord reposes within them. Let us imagine, said he, after coming from the holy table, that our Lord says in us, *Me autem non semper habetis*, Make the most of this good day, "*you have not Me always*," and let us employ ourselves fervently in adoring him. Let our hearts speak, let them love this Lord, let them petition this Lord, He prefers the language of the heart to studied discourses, or long vocal forms of prayer. I say this, because many leave the delicious interior communication for long prayer and meditations not at all to the purpose. For what are these but means to prepare for the divine Guest. When He comes we ought to leave these means and go direct to Him. What can books teach that the Eternal Wisdom knows not? What profit in discourse with holy persons, comparable to that received in communing with the Holy of holies? What is the end of spiritual exercises but to lead us to God? Having found Him, then let us be content, and taste in peace how sweet he is.

But if He disapproved of confining one's self after communion to set forms, he loudly condemned the short and cursory thanksgiving where-with many strive to repay their great benefactor. Ah! my Lord, said he, the soul who is not joyful with you is unworthy of joy, he that is not satisfi-

ed with you merits no content, he that leaves you for the creature deserves to be abandoned by you, and left in his innate misery.

With such sentiments, it is no wonder that Father Balthasar was most devout to the Holy Sacrament. He often visited it, sometimes spent whole nights before it, and when exposed, he never removed his eyes from it. It greatly afflicted him to observe the courts and levees of princes so faithfully attended, whilst few came to pay court to the Sovereign and Prince of all kings, in the adorable mystery of his excessive love. He deemed religious persons extremely happy, because they lodge our Lord under their roof, and can visit him at any hour. Having one morning, when Rector, made his usual round of the college, to see if all were at mental prayer, the idea struck him that our Lord was in the midst of the house, "the doors being shut," as after his resurrection, giving to *his* religious, as to the Apostles, his peace and benediction.

CHAPTER IV.

THE GREAT GOOD HE OPERATED IN SOULS.

FATHER Balthasar conceived a great zeal for the salvation of souls, in which our Lord confirmed him by many lights and graces. He greatly esteemed his vocation to our institute, the end of it being *the glory of God and the spiritual good of man*. Having one day given our Lord some great proof of his zeal, he next morning manifested himself to him at meditation, loaded and oppressed, as it were, with gifts and graces, to dispense them to those who would merit them by similar acts. This animated

our servant of God to greater fidelity. Another time he was given to understand, that love of the neighbour was a sacred act, and a great proof of love of God, which required that a person should assist others willingly, speak to them obligingly, bear with them cheerfully, convinced that in whatsoever manner he treats others, he will be treated by God. That he might not be discouraged in his labours for souls, he was endowed with a great confidence in divine Providence. He felt then, that if it were vain to expect to succeed in an affair undertaken contrary to the will of God, it was impious to hope for success in any thing which he had appointed. Lest he might give himself too much to external functions, he was soon shown that they required great graces, that the minister of God ought to be like those animals seen by Ezechiel, *all full of eyes*, to guard against the remotest danger, to see the faults committed in his several functions, and adopt the means necessary to prevent their repetition. In what he did for others, it was evident that his only aim was the divine glory; knowing that God is not a respecter of persons, he as willingly laboured for the poor as for the rich, for the ignorant as for the learned. He sought not to obtain the character of a great director, and made it evident to his penitents that he only undertook to guide them at the movement of the Holy Ghost. He was possessed of so superior a judgment, that joined with his kindness and affability, he acquired the esteem and confidence of all. He used great freedom in his direction, not attaching himself to his penitents, nor allowing the least sign of inordinate affection in them. He left them quite free to confess when they pleased to any other priest, and warmly censured the opposite practice. Nay, he sometimes absented

himself totally from the confessional that they might be obliged to do so, knowing that the best established confidence may be sometimes weakened, and that liberty of conscience is absolutely necessary.

Though his zeal was ardent, it was still tempered by prudence. He sought not to direct many, but he endeavoured to advance those of whom he had care. He was most anxious for the spiritual advancement of his penitents: it seemed to him, that, with the aid of the Sacraments, no person could plead inability to correct his vices and acquire true and solid virtues, even though not favoured with a great gift of prayer and interior recollection. This was so well known, that the lukewarm and negligent totally avoided him. He felt a strong attractive, and certainly a singular grace for the direction of interior souls. Knowing the strict account that would be required of their advancement, he earnestly laboured for it, exercising them well in the practice of abnegation of will and judgment, causing each one according to his grace to overcome himself, to retrench all superfluities, and profit of every occasion of suffering and humiliation. He often mortified severely, but accompanied his reproofs even with such cordiality, that they never took them ingraciously. St. Teresa and holy Mary Diaz, whose lives are already before the public, acknowledge that he was the person who contributed most effectually to their spiritual progress, though his measures were sometimes sufficiently rigorous.

CHAPTER V.

HIS CONTEMPLATIVE LIFE,

ST. Teresa, whom all recognise as the great mistress of prayer, says, that she never spoke of any degree of contemplation to Father Balthasar which he did not understand. After practising ordinary meditation for seventeen years with great fidelity, he found himself, as he disclosed to the general of the Society, called to the extraordinary. "Then it was," said he, "that I truly learned how to estimate all things as they merited, then it was I perceived that in possessing God I possessed all, and enjoyed such peace that it seemed to me I reposed in the bosom of the Divinity. This diminished a little, but returned at intervals in a greater or less degree, Deo gratias. Here it was that I received grace to suffer and be fastened to the cross, and lost that pusillanimity which made me tremble before others, whom I knew to be so wise and holy in comparison to me, and without whom I fancied I could do nothing, for here I saw that however miserable I was, God more than sufficed to all my wants. My least actions were now animated by the interior spirit; in this blessed life they were, I found, better performed than if I had been long forecasting them, so true is that of St. Peter, "Cast all your solicitude on the Lord, for he has care of you." This life, this spirit, was my bulwark of defence in treating with the neighbour; here I learned to pass through many cares without care. Entering often into myself to consider the sacred humanity of Jesus Christ, I plainly saw that he gives more to the truly mortified in one hour of prayer, than he

does in many to those who are not so. I lost my desire to make long meditations; for God bestows more in occupations performed for his love, than in idleness and repose. Thenceforward my faults humbled without confounding me, for they made me trust more in God and diffide in myself. Indeed, they seemed, as it were, the inlets of divine light, to teach my soul its own insufficiency. Involuntary faults, I perceived, hinder not divine communications; hence, a person should not reflect on them too often by way of remedying them, but rather turn himself to God, who will in due season give him the victory."

This holy man giving us in his writings, an account of his prayer, says, "When I began my prayer, I felt the presence of God in an incomprehensible manner, not by the imagination, but with a certain feeling of him. The effects of this sort of view, are a great peace of the soul, so that she seems confirmed in good, a great disengagement, a certain conviction that she is led by the Spirit of God, a great spirit of prayer, and a sovereign contentment without her perceiving how it comes to her."

How specially favoured was this good Father by our blessed Lord in his meditations. When he came from prayer, he seemed to make one spirit with Him. Nor was his union with Him less perfect at other times; he himself acknowledged to a person in affliction, that, for his part, his "*conversation was in heaven.*" He was favoured with many other graces, one of the most considerable was, the revelation of his predestination. One day conversing with Father Gil de la Mata, upon the happiness of a person who is sure of possessing God for ever; "I at least," said he, "have a certainty of salvation." It is one of the greatest favours our

Lord bestows on some few, and wonderful to relate, it rather serves as a spur to advance than a curb to restrain them. He also received by means of prayer, a great intelligence of the holy scriptures, of scholastic truths, and theological difficulties, so that he used to say, our Lord wonderfully supplied the narrowness of his intellect.

CHAPTER VI.

HIS ACTIVE LIFE.

THE zeal and charity of Father Balthasar were proof against every difficulty. One time when dangerously ill, he rose from his bed to go to hear the confession of one of his penitents, who lay at the point of death, and was suffering much from interior pains, saying to those who represented to him the risk he ran of increasing his disease, that his health was a trifling sacrifice for the spiritual good of others. Indeed, he was accustomed to act on this principle. While Rector, having learned from a young novice that he was greatly annoyed by the devil, who came to torment him corporally in his cell; he desired him to say the next night he approached, If you have leave, enter; but if not, go to the room of the Father Rector. The novice did so, but reversed the words. Instead of saying, If you have leave, enter, he said, Enter, if you have leave, which failure in exact obedience, caused him another beating; but the second night, being grown more wise, he said the words as directed, and freed himself from the cruelty of the arch fiend, who, enraged at his defeat, repaid with interest the Father Rector. On one occasion having to preach a sermon on charity, he was

about to compose it, when the Prior of St. Isidore expressed a wish to speak to him at some length. He complied, willingly running the hazard of being unprepared for his discourse, but he found that the best mode of preaching on charity, was first to practise it.

This good Father willingly relinquished his spiritual consolations to benefit others, *the charity of Christ so pressed him*, that he forgot himself to think of them. He rendered many persons most signal services. The spiritual exercises of St. Ignatius, were productive of great fruit when given by him, for his words seemed so many burning sparks, kindling on all sides the holy flame which Jesus "came to cast on earth." He effected among seculars the most signal conversions ; but let us see the great fruit reaped from him by his novices, it will still furnish a more complete idea of his spirit and eminent sanctity.

CHAPTER VII.

HIS CONDUCT WHILE MASTER OF NOVICES.

BEING fully aware of the importance of the charge of master of novices, Father Balthasar, when appointed to it, took a singular care of these young plants in the garden of religion. He happened to have many sublimely endowed, but they were in his presence as so many children. He was so eminently favoured with the gift of discerning spirits, that he perfectly knew the designs of God on each. The general mode of conducting them was, first to attach them to the exercise of prayer and recollection, and to perform well the other spiritual exercises. For those who entered the noviceship at an advanced age, he prolonged

the retreat to seventy days, having had more intercourse with the world, and consequently, being likely to find more difficulty in restraining their imaginative powers. He was quite pleased when they begged permission to make extraordinary prayer, at the same time he taught them that prayer was not their end, but rather a means to acquire a perfect death to self. The spirit of mortification was the next thing he recommended, as well as a love of suffering and humiliation. And they profited exceedingly under his direction, manifesting the greatest desire of being humbled and despised, concealing their talents, publishing their defects, performing the meanest offices, seeking the most annoying duties, begging for reprehensions, and, in fine, they so loved and esteemed what the world hates and despises, that they soon attained a great facility in the practice of religious perfection. They were so mortified that it was necessary to moderate the austerities they practised, and oblige them to take recreation. One among them, Antonio de Padilla, a nobleman of Castile, profited exceedingly by his religious education, and became as humble in religion as he had been great in the world.

Father Balthasar exhorted his novices every third day; the intermediate one he held a spiritual conference, the subject of which was the discourse of the preceding day, or some other point of perfection. These were attended with great fruit; his words were so persuasive that his auditory was moved to do all that he recommended. He was favoured with a singular talent for instructing them, as he himself confessed, "I have received of our Lord a manner of proposing truths, whereby great good is effected. Guarding the order of his providence, He gives me just at the moment it is

wanted all the knowledge and understanding required."

F. Balthasar was not less enlightened in the direction of each novice in particular: he had a special grace for encouraging them when dejected, and consoling them when troubled or afflicted. Often they found themselves relieved from their troubles, by simply mentioning them in giving an account of conscience. Sometimes while they spoke he was consulting our Lord with the crucifix before him, and always with success. He was often cognizant of what passed in each novice without any previous information, so that he knew what was necessary for them. Father de la Mata, who came to Medina expressly to make his second noviceship under Father Balthasar, says, that he was ten weeks manifesting his conscience to him without receiving a word of advice, though he spoke much to others. On expressing his mortification thereat, the father told him that he knew he was not annoyed by temptations, &c. which de la Mata was obliged to admit. When at Valladolid, the same brother wishing to speak to Father Balthasar of his desire to be sent on the Japanese mission, he was kept four hours waiting to try his patience and humility. When, having heard him out, he said, "Fear not, you will be sent to Japan, our general will send an order to that effect, which eventually happened.

Sometimes he said nothing to the novices on hearing their account, but merely that they should pray to God for their spiritual wants, and that he would do the same; but at the next public exhortation he said to all in general what was good for each in particular. His prayers effected wonderful things in them; but his example operated more, for he was the first in practising what he preached. His noviceship

was so famed for regularity and fervour, that many fathers came to Medina, not alone to perform the exercises, but to be edified by the example of the novices instructed by Father Balthasar. The great Father Baptist Sanchez used to speak in raptures when in the college of Salamanca of the wonders he witnessed in the noviceship at Medina: but it was not alone a talent for forming persons to the institute where-with Father Balthasar was favoured, he was also endowed with a singular grace for conducting those already professed to great perfection, as we shall show in the following chapter.

CHAPTER VIII.

CONDUCT OF FATHER BALTHASAR IN THE SUPERIORITY.

IF Father Balthasar was so competent in training the novices, he was no less so for conducting the ancient fathers. This was particularly exemplified in one of them, son to the duke of Cordova; though formerly rector of Salamanca, he was the humblest of all when Father Balthasar governed that college. Taught by so great a master, he edified all by becoming so great a lover of his own contempt; he used to say that having received a talent for mean functions, he ought to exercise them as he did. Singular facts are recounted of him, which evince his great love for humiliations.

In a great measure it was owing to Father Balthasar. He it was that promoted the advancement of all in every college which he governed. He more esteemed those who were less talented; but more fervent than the others. Nor would he

suffer that for the temporal necessities of a house the spiritual exercises should be deferred or omitted. He relied on God for all. Once, when rector of a college, the funds being very low, the procurator came to tell him that such and such things were wanting. "How solicitous our father procurator is," said the holy man. "Has he yet communicated this want to our Lord?" "No!" replied the procurator, "I have not even time to do so." "Well," said Father Balthasar, "you should have first done this. Go now to your cell and tell him all about it. Do you not think this little flock, has a pastor? Indeed it has, and one who has not spared for it His own life and blood; rely on him then for its well being." The procurator obeyed, and, wonderful to relate, on returning he found means of extricating the community from its embarrassment in a manner almost miraculous, in reward, no doubt, of the confidence of the good father rector.

As superior, he was foremost in giving good example, being the first at all the exercises of the community, prayer, examen, &c. He served in the kitchen according to rule; he chose for this the first day in each month, that seeing the superior begin, all might be punctual to this abject practice. He much esteemed the advantage of following the community, saying, "That God bestowed on the exercises a greater benediction when performed according to rule." He earnestly begged sufficient health for this purpose, and even when sick dissembled his illness that he might follow the observances. He used to say that it was better to live a few years *less* and follow the rule, than a few years more, at the expence of religious discipline and common edification.

He was most kind and affable to his religious:

if he sometimes assumed an air of severity, it was only for their greater merit, and he soon again resumed his wonted affability. He treated them with respect; was careful to prevent any among them from being sad or melancholy, saying, "That there should be no one sad in the house of God, and that an excessive joy was more pardonable than excessive sadness." He compassionated such of the brethren as were naturally weak and often fell through fragility; he endeavoured to lead them by gentle and easy means, and happily succeeded with many. He was most punctual to the least duties of his office to the day and hour in which he resigned it. After being rector of various colleges, he was appointed visitor of the province of Arragon, and afterwards nominated to be provincial of Toledo, in which office he died. Father Mercurianus, the then general, said he could not find one to discharge this office more advantageously than Father Balthasar.

This good superior as earnestly laboured for the salvation of souls abroad, as well as his religious at home. He was most careful to have the Christian doctrine regularly taught. On Sundays he used to go out in the evening with the students in procession singing the catechism, and having said the usual prayers before the door of some church, or in one of the public places, he made an exhortation to those who had assembled, which operated great good. He used to do the same when journeying from one city to another. During the time he remained at Cervina, his native place, when visiting the province, he went out with his bell to assemble the children to catechism, which was quite a novelty. All admired that so great a person should perform this most humble of all functions.

The fame of F. Balthasar ran so high, that Peru solicited him as provincial. The general consented, and he was ordered to prepare for the Indies. He did so most readily; but some persons having represented to the general the great good he wrought in Spain, he received an order to remain.

CHAPTER IX.

HIS EXTRAORDINARY GRACES.

BESIDES the gift of prophecy, Father Balthasar was sometimes visibly favoured by the angels and saints, particularly in dangerous journeys. He was extremely devout to these blessed spirits; indeed, our Lord inspired him with a great affection for them at his meditation. 22nd Dec. 1571, especially towards the angel of the Annunciation, and of the agony in Gethsemani, the blessed Gabriel, as well as to all the angels of the just, and particularly of those under his direction.

Like all the elect, he was singularly devout to the glorious Virgin Mary. The devil did all he could to divert him from it by various temptations. One time at prayer he heard him say distinctly, "I shall cease to annoy you if you cease to honour that woman they call Mary." Having made the pilgrimage of Loretto, he received most signal graces by the intercession of the Blessed Mother; it was then she recommended to him a great devotion to St. Joseph; he used to pass whole nights before her picture painted by St. Luke, which he brought from the church of St. Mary Major at Rome, to the chapel of our college at Medina. Who can say what passed in these sacred colloquies? No wonder that Father Bal-

thasar was so enriched with all graces, particularly that favourite one of this glorious Virgin, *humility* and *self-contempt*. He surpassed so much therein, that we cannot avoid treating a little more fully of it.

When provincial of Toledo, he used to go on his knees to the cells of the ancient fathers, and begged with all humility to be allowed to kiss their hands. He at all times studied to conceal his natural gifts and supernatural graces: finding in the beginning some opposition to it, and being tempted to consider it a great act of humility, he considered in himself how Jesus concealed all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge while here on earth, and he thus obtained the victory. We know but a few of the great graces bestowed on him, though he was always ready to declare his spiritual wants, his faults and imperfections; he used to say that he neither had learning, or understanding, or virtue, or any thing good. One time giving an account of conscience to Father Gonzalez of Avila, he also declared the sins of his life, to the great amazement and edification of the father. So far from conceiving a more favourable idea of himself, because of the graces he received, he used to say that he learned virtue from his novices, and that the example of the brethren made him ashamed of his little progress in perfection.

To try him, he was sent many humiliations and persecutions. He bore them most patiently, and tried to exemplify in himself what he taught others, that there is no humility without humiliation, no patience without suffering, no perfection without sacrificing all that is most dear for the glory of God. The following victory gained over himself almost confirmed him we might say in

the grace and virtue of humility. At a provincial assembly one time, he was accused publicly of a considerable fault. Conscious of his innocence, and knowing his ability to prove it, he at first intended to rebut the charge, and was even advised to do so by one of the fathers, lest any one might be scandalised, finding so considerable a person guilty of such an offence; but fearing that in doing so he might be swayed by his natural inclinations, he asked the opinion of another holy man, who told him to sacrifice his reputation, and remain silent. He did so, and by this means obtained a complete victory over self-love. He ever after adhered to this practice, except obedience obliged him to give reasons for his conduct. If it was said that persons were unjust in their behaviour towards him, let us rather thank them, said he, for the great good they thereby render to my poor soul. How, said a person once to him, do you require me to be so kind to a person who has done *you* so great a wrong? "Ah!" replied F. Balthasar mildly, "do try to gain him. If you don't succeed with him, at least I shall with myself." On hearing the calumnies uttered against him, he joyfully said, "I am now convinced that God loves me, since he treats me as one of his elect. Indeed, when I have nothing to suffer, I am ready to fear he has forgotten me." These trials in no wise lessened the peace of his soul, it dwelt in a region far beyond their reach; the only return he made his enemies, was to load them with kindnesses. He suffered much on account of his prayer, many taking him for a visionary, but when he manifested all to his superiors, they were quite satisfied he was led by the Spirit of God, and the persecution ceased. To prove his humility, Father James Miron requested he would accompany him to Portugal, of

which he was appointed visitor, but Father Balthasar refused, saying, he preferred sanctifying himself in the little noviceship of Medina, which he then governed. But, said Father James, you will acquire so much additional information by making this journey, that at your return you will be elected general. "Ah, brother!" said the holy man, "if you knew how little I value offices and charges, you would not think of tempting me to seek them. I should rather remain all my life in a corner of a noviceship, than exercise the office of superior."

Notwithstanding his repugnance to offices, Father Balthasar was often nominated to them. It was while he discharged that of Provincial of Toledo, that he was called to a happy eternity, as we shall now see.

CHAPTER X

HAPPY DEATH OF FATHER BALTHASAR.

A JUBILEE having been granted by his holiness Pope Gregory 13th, Father Balthasar prepared to receive its fruits, and fasted the fifteen days set down in the bull, though his great weakness and many infirmities loudly claimed a dispensation. It was then summer, when the weather is in Spain intensely hot, so that in going from Villagarcia to Belmonte, he contracted a violent fever. The physicians did not think it dangerous, but the holy man knew his hour was come, and prepared for it by a general confession, which he made to F. Alonze Montoya. Having received the Holy Viaticum, and Extreme Unction, he begged that no stranger might be allowed to enter,

in order that his intercourse with God might not be interrupted; and had a person nominated to discharge his office, that he might not be any more consulted on the affairs of the house. When his malady increased, the physician wished to insinuate his danger covertly, and without alarming him; but Father Balthasar removed his difficulty, saying courageously, "Tell me the truth: I am not sorry for life, nor afraid of death?" The members of the college were greatly afflicted at the idea of losing him, and having assembled to witness his happy passage, begged he would say something for their edification, but he continued to converse interiorly with God, until, with every mark of holy peace and joy, he sweetly gave up the ghost, on the twenty-fifth of July, the feast of St. James, 1580, in the forty-seventh year of his age, and twenty-fifth of his religious profession.

When his death was published, several came, attracted by his reputation for sanctity, to see his remains. They emitted a most fragrant odour, and were honoured by miracles. Donna Joanna of Castile, procured part of these holy remains for our house at Villarejos de Fuentes, and Donna Magdalen, another member of the royal family, begged a portion of them for that at Villagarcia. By invoking him, many received great graces, so that almost all were confirmed in their opinion of his sanctity. Indeed, there were many proofs of it. His happy death, and great glory in heaven, were shown to a great servant of God, named Beata of St. Francis, who lived at Burgos, and received from God most sublime graces. One day, being at prayer, she heard a voice say to her interiorly, Come and assist at the death of a holy man, and immediately found herself transported in spirit to the bedside of a sick person, at which she saw a

great many ecclesiastics, and a number of angels. Soon after, she perceived five others enter in sacerdotal costume shining resplendently, particularly one of them. This priest, having approached the bed, took the invalid by the hand, whereupon he immediately expired, and his blessed soul ascended into Heaven, accompanied by all present in solemn procession, except two angels, who remained incensing the sacred remains. Our Lord having revealed to her, that it was Father Balthasar she had just seen expire, she related the whole vision to F. Christopher de Ribera, of our Society, who took a note of the day and hour it had taken place, which he found to correspond exactly with the official account, which was soon after received.

St. Teresa, too, learned by revelation the death of her holy confessor, and felt it so deeply, that she wept for near an hour; whereat one of the nuns having expressed her amazement that she would make so much account of what passed with time, the saint said, that her grief was occasioned by the loss the church sustained in the death of so holy a person. Soon after she had one of her usual raptures. It lasted two hours, and in the course of it, the glory and happiness of the servant of God were manifested to her.

“May my soul die the death of the just.

MRS. SUSANNA DE NEUVILLARS;

OR, THE FERVENT CONVERT.

CHAPTER I.

SUSANNA, daughter of Mr. Pommelie, a most respectable man, but regarded as one of the firmest supporters of Calvinism in his province, was born in 1571, at the chateau of Pommelie, near Limoges. Educated in the errors of her parents, it would seem she attached herself to them indissolubly by her marriage with Mr. de la Neuville, equally infected with Calvinistic principles; but having frequent occasion to visit one of her aunts, who was educated in the true faith, and became a nun, she often conversed with her on religious subjects.

She was not long without perceiving the falsity of her own principles. She examined the matter to the bottom, and after weighing the arguments on both sides, felt irresistibly drawn to the Roman Catholic faith, as the only true one. But she did not yet dare to profess openly the change of her sentiments, fearing the indignation of her family, who carried fanaticism to the highest degree; she contended herself with uniting her intention with the prayers &c. of the faithful, and communicated with them as much as circumstances would permit. She spent the Sunday mornings at the highest window in the chateau of Neuville looking at the people going to the holy Mass; she followed them with her eyes as far as she

could, and her prayers accompanied theirs at the altar of the Lamb. To render hers more acceptable, she knelt down as soon as the bell tolled, and continued thus till she supposed the divine sacrifice finished. How did she envy the happy liberty of these people! She would prefer the condition of the poorest among them to all her riches and honours. What bitter anguish did she not feel at being born among the great of the earth, since it exposed her to the danger of losing heaven.

Already prevented by a particular grace which lights up in the bosom of error the principles of true faith, she tasted in prayer the sweetest consolations; the tears which she shed in abundance, her continual aspirations and sighs towards heaven, already designated her a chosen vessel. She incessantly besought the Lord to restore her to the liberty of his children. She implored the Blessed Virgin and the saints, particularly St. Anne, whom she styled her mistress and advocate with God for this end, and procured some little objects of Catholic devotion to remind her of the divine presence.

Her faith was not yet strong enough to inspire her with resolution to surmount the obstacles which opposed her conversion. Her aunt and her sister solicited this grace of God, and he soon fully granted it. Being obliged to go alone to Limoges for the arrangement of some affairs, Susanna seized this occasion, so favourable to her desires, and went without hesitation, but not without a struggle, to the church of the Fathers Recollects of St. Francis. A single conference with one of these religious dissipated all her doubts, and the following day, which was Palm Sunday, she pronounced her abjuration and by a

general confession disposed herself for the reception of the holy eucharist. At this divine banquet, in which she received the Author of grace, she found herself inundated with inexpressible delights, such as she never before experienced. Then it was she was convinced that it is at this divine feast, prepared by the angels for the friends of the spouse, that we draw our principal strength against all the enemies we have to war with, for she now felt so fortified, that, trampling on human respect, she openly avowed herself a Catholic, and declared her intention of living and dying in the true Church.

From this moment she began to be persecuted by all her friends: her husband absolutely hated her; considering her as the opprobrium of his family, he loaded her with the bitterest reproaches. Her sterility (for she was now five years married without having children,) added to his contempt for her, and this imperious man treated her as a menial slave; but to all his outrages, as well as to the sarcasms of her father-in-law, and the solicitations of his wife, she only opposed patience and resignation. She faithfully observed all the precepts of religion, no consideration could induce her to depart from them; but she took care not to irritate the family more, concealing with this view her habitual exercises of devotion, which were only a mere matter of counsel. It was generally during the night she satisfied her inclination in this point.

For some time after her conversion she was greatly tormented by scruples. She had formed too rigorous ideas of the practice of religion, and delivered herself to excessive mortification; this, however pure her motives, indisposed her friends still more against her and the true faith; but

Providence soon averted the dangers to which she was thereby exposed. A good clergyman, to whom she opened the state of her soul, removed all her scruples by his wisdom and discernment. The moment she met him, a secret voice said within her, "Speak confidently to this priest, he will show thee, on My part, the ways of peace and salvation." She was now restored to peace and confidence, her darkness was dissipated, her faith confirmed, her fears tranquillized. The man of God instructed her in the duties of her state, he pointed out to her the sanctity and indissolubility of marriage, and the confidence, submission, and respect which she owed her husband. He afterwards moderated the severity of her penances, diminished her extraordinary practices of devotion, and recommended in their stead interior acts of charity, humility, obedience, patience, and resignation to the divine will. Firmly convinced that whoever wishes to follow Jesus should "renounce himself," this wise and holy Ananias formed his penitent to mortification, teaching her to deny her senses the lightest gratification, and opening to her the path which was to lead her to perfection, without being too severe or too condescending.

Susanna gave continual proofs of docility and obedience, and never strayed from the course pointed out to her, and God, in recompence to her fidelity, permitted that the birth of a son should restore her to the good graces of her spouse. Then fully re-established in her rights, she displayed such prudence in the conduct of affairs, that every thing was left to her direction. Like the strong woman in the Proverbs, Susanna sufficed for all. She took the tenderest care of her servants and watched over their conduct with unceas-

ing vigilance. She never received a domestic who was not a Catholic and a faithful observer of her religion. The poor were the continual objects of her solicitude: she informed herself of their wants, assuaged their miseries, and when age or infirmity hindered them from coming to the chateau, she visited them, and brought to their poor cabins abundance of consolation.

Her virtue now appeared to advantage. She endeavoured to make herself amiable to all, and gave her friends and those of her husband, every mark of kindness and attention. This conduct, joined to the tender and affectionate cares lavished on himself, dissipated all his prejudices against her and religion, and procured her full liberty of conscience.

She profited thereof in labouring ardently in the education of the young family with which God had blessed her. Her conversation was generally in heaven, her heart being totally disengaged from the earth. She would imagine herself doing her children an injury, if, in procuring them the goods of this world, she neglected their eternal welfare; hence, from their tenderest infancy, she inspired them with an high esteem and affection for all that regards God, a profound respect for the adorable sacrifice of the mass, for the Sacraments, particularly those of penance and the holy Eucharist, in fine, for every thing that contributes to sanctity. Anxious to preserve the precious treasure of their baptismal innocence, she removed from them every occasion, every person, whose example or discourse might tarnish its lustre. She spared no expence to procure for them a good education, and generously provided for their amusement, lest too great severity might afterwards lead them to the pursuit of for-

bidden pleasures. Nor was her zeal less indefatigable in maintaining them in fidelity and submission to the Roman Catholic faith. They were exposed to great danger of losing this precious deposit from the insinuations of their heretical relatives, but this pious mother soon disabused them, gave them eloquent instructions, made them pray with her, and thus preserved these young plants from being withered by the chill blast of error. She in time gained such an ascendant over her spouse by the amiability of her character, that she persuaded him to let his sons be educated at the Jesuit's college in Limoges, although the Calvinist ministers did all they could to have them placed in their own school. She did not think this favour too dearly purchased by the numberless sacrifices with which she bought it.

We cannot declare the zealous efforts of this fervent convert for the conversion of her sisters-in-law, who lived with her, and who were not less obstinate in their errors than her husband. She at first strove to gain them by amiability of manners and manifestations of kindness, while she charmed them by the sanctity of her conduct. Having thus opened the way to the heart, she succeeded so well in disabusing them of their heretical opinions, that they not only embraced the true faith, but practised the divine counsels in their utmost perfection the rest of their lives. It would be impossible for her to labour more ardently than she did for the conversion of her husband. To convert him was the principal object of all her prayers and good works. The better she knew his difficult character, the more prudently she acted, and the more tenderness and submission she employed to gain him. To some who, actuated by indiscreet zeal, fancied that she was

too reserved in her measures for his conversion, she said, "The conversion of Mr. de Neuvillars will be the work of God, who touches the heart when he pleases: I am continually praying for this favour, but am sure if I teased him too much when he has so little disposition to hear me, I should ruin all. An extraordinary grace is necessary for him: who can bestow it but God; and is there any means better calculated to obtain it than tears and prayers, and these we unceasingly employ. Would you wish me to transform my house into hell, to render my husband a persecutor, and my children apostates? I am as anxious as possible for his conversion, I do all I can for it, and would die rather than depart from the true faith, but zeal has its limits." Such were the wise and prudent sentiments which Susanna had learned in the school of Jesus Christ; *they equally condemn those who, through false condescension and blameful liberality of sentiment, will not trouble their friends on the score of religion, as these who carry matters too far through indiscreet zeal.*

While she thus laboured for her husband's conversion, she effected, by the force of argument, as well as by the sanctity of her life, that of her relative, Mr. de Lucha, a young man, who, educated in the principles of Calvin, was on the brink of atheism. She instructed this unfortunate adept of a misnamed philosophy, and after conducting him firmly but sweetly into the right path, she soon saw him not only a Catholic, but a fervent disciple of Christ crucified. This conversion drew on her such a persecution from the Calvinist ministers, as well as from her family, that she thought it would be advisable to leave home for some time at least, till the violence of the storm ceased; but imagining she was thus betraying the

cause of God, she soon returned, and the menaces of her adversaries ceded to her courage and moderation. This brother, after valiantly serving his country and his king, embraced the order of St. Francis, and died in the odour of sanctity under the name of Father Paulinus.

Susanna endeavoured to gain all around her to God; she sometimes spoke of divine things with such zeal and fervour, that her auditors experienced in themselves strange revolutions. One day, two young ladies of rank, intoxicated with the vanities of the age, were so penetrated by her words, that they renounced the world and embraced the austere order of St. Clare. As God is the Lord of the little as well as of the great, she laboured as earnestly for their conversion. The poor villagers, to whom her house was always open, never withdrew from her without being touched and penetrated with the truths of faith, in which she instructed them in a manner suited to their capacity. Many sinners owed their conversion to her, many heretics attributed to her zeal their return to the true faith. God regarded her efforts with so much complacency, that he sometimes discovered to her the interior of those who came to ask her advice or prayers, and commanded her to warn them of certain sins, which opposed in them the effects of grace.

The obedience of this good soul to her confessor, was, as we have said, most unlimited. "Whatever good works I might perform," said she herself, "I should not feel satisfied if I had not the approbation of my confessor: I deem it a crime not to be submissive to him. If I wish to do a good action, I never tease him for permission, I merely tell him that I could perform such a good work, and then leave him to direct me, lest I should seek

myself. I consider my confessor as the representative of God, and in my regard, the organ of his will. In the extraordinary communications with which my divine Lord seems to favour me, I submit entirely to the judgment of his minister, for I am an ignorant blind creature; all that proceeds from me is nothing."

In the spirit of obedience she abstained from extraordinary austerities, but her life was a continual martyrdom; every day she crucified her senses, renounced self-will, and tempered the satisfactions she enjoyed by salutary mortifications.

But what shall we say of her profound humility? With an holy candour and simplicity, she sometimes said, "I feel I have no virtue whatever; it seems to me that I am masked when I practice any exterior acts thereof. I feel that I am the greatest sinner on earth. O my Saviour, through the merits of your precious blood, I conjure you that I may die, rather than conceive for myself vain esteem or complacency; I would rather be trodden under foot like a worm, than be honoured at the expense of your glory. Since I am so ungrateful, and make so bad a use of your graces, withdraw them from me, my God! and give them to some other who will turn them to better account."

She avoided praises as others shun injuries and insults, and experienced extreme confusion in rendering to her confessor an account of the favours she received, and of the virtues she practised. Obedience alone made her surmount her repugnance. If allowed to follow her inclination, she would dress like the poorest villager, she would spend all the time she could spare with the poor, and expose herself to public scorn and contempt. The companions of her good works

received from her, services the most abject. When they travelled, she prepared the repasts at the inns. Unknown to them she arose first in the morning, procured them fire and candles, helped them to dress, and procured them all possible conveniences, while she chose for herself the worst of every thing.

With such saintly dispositions it would be impossible she should not possess the spirit of prayer; she indeed was loaded therein with ineffable graces. Jesus Christ often visited her soul most sensibly in this holy exercise, and bestowed on her the sweetest consolations. It was especially at the holy Communion this divine master caressed her more tenderly. Her confessor, fearing some illusion, ordered her once to reject these consolations. She tried to obey, but our Lord made her hear these words in her soul, "What, my daughter! fearest thou that I wish to destroy thee—I, who have shed the last drop of my blood to save thee? Be assured thou art not deceived, and confidently say so to thy confessor. Yes, my daughter," continued this amiable Saviour, "I wish to give thee an idea of the sweets of Paradise." "On hearing this," says Susanna herself, "I felt within me such a calm, that I never conceived more forcibly what St. Paul calls 'the peace of God.'" One night, having gone to rest after a long communication with God, she was suddenly awakened as if by a voice from heaven, and having promptly raised her heart to God, she felt such an abundance of holy joy flow into her soul, that she thought herself already among the blessed. This holy gladness lasted as long as she lived; no sentiment of sadness ever rose in her heart which it did not immediately dissipate.

We have seen this holy woman pass through

the crucible before she experienced these delights. While a prey to scrupulosity, wrestling against herself without guide or counsel, she most certainly would have become a prey to despair, but for a little spark of confidence in God. In such agonising moments, pious souls, remember the virtuous Susanna de Neuvillars; like her, redouble your zeal for the divine honour, bear your cross patiently, and God will send you a guide full of his Spirit, who will conduct your steps in the way to Him. Under such conduct, Susanna soon saw her troubles disappear, because she obeyed with all the simplicity of a child.

All the works of the most High were so many means to elevate her to their principle, to manifest to her his power, to cause her to adore his wisdom, to bless his goodness, and to consecrate herself anew to his love. She unceasingly found the Creator in his creatures. If she walked in a garden, a flower, a blade of grass, a worm, a fly, led her to contemplate the divine perfections. If she treated with her children or domestics, she regarded not outward appearances; but viewing them in the light of faith, she considered in them deformity of sin, or the beauty of grace, according as she knew their actual dispositions—or the end of their creation, the price of their redemption—and she was obliged to do herself violence, or these reflections would have absorbed all other thought. The sight of a furnace or lighted flambeaux represented to her the fire of hell or the flames of divine love; then, elevating her heart to God, she besought him that she might never burn with other flames than those of his charity. When alone, she prostrated herself, and became so profoundly recollected, that whoever surprised her in this attitude was greatly moved: it had power-

ful effects on her husband. Often she spent her nights and mornings in a tower at the summit of the chateau ; there, having no other object before her save heaven's high arch, enamelled with starry gems, or blazing in the golden rays of the orb of day, she contemplated with rapture and amazement the beauties of the celestial Sion, and wept over the strange infatuation of men, who prefer earth to heaven, time to eternity, sin to grace; there she sighed over the prolongation of her exile, and exclaimed, "O Sovereign Beauty! when will you free your poor captive, when will you break my chains, and set me at liberty?" "As the hart pants after the fountains of water, so does my soul after thee, my God."

Although her life was a continual prayer, she used to spend every year a certain time in retreat, and this in some religious house, that she might be more at liberty to converse with her divine master. It was in these sacred asylums that she prayed more fervently for her family. Her children, as we have seen, were all educated in the true faith; all persevered in it, and many of them gave themselves to God in different religious orders, and became in them models of fervour and regularity. Her husband outlived her, and wished before his death to become a catholic, but he was not able to make his confession; it is to be hoped God regarded his good will.

Like holy Job and St. Paul, the virtuous Susanna "desired to be with Christ;" but the accomplishment of her desires was still deferred. She sought her sovereign good on all sides, but every creature told her with St. Augustine, "He whom thou seekest, is not *in* us, but *above* us." But entirely resigned to the will of God, she became more fervent and charitable than ever; her last

steps in the road of life were signalised by new acts of charity, new acts of zeal, for the decoration of the sanctuary, and new fervour in the holy exercise of prayer.

At length she was taken ill ; her distemper was violent, but her patience was proof against all. When they told her she was despaired of by the physicians, she begged they would sing a *Te Deum* in thanksgiving for the news, and raising her hands and eyes to heaven, expressed her love and gratitude in such moving terms, as affected all present. During the nineteen days of her painful illness, she never complained, except of the sins of her life, her want of fidelity to grace, and the care they took to assuage her sufferings. "I am sorry," said she, "to die in down and silk, assisted by so many persons ; it was not in such delicacy my Beloved breathed his last. There is nothing like Him in me." As they presented her with a very simple meat, yet one which she much liked, she contented herself by looking at it, saying, "I wish to sacrifice this indulgence to God, like David, when pressed with extreme thirst, sacrificed that water which his servants brought him, at the risk of their lives." She received the holy communion every third day, and having assembled her children, gave them her last advices in so penetrating a tone, that their young hearts were almost rent, and all present were affected to tears. The love of God, fear of sin, contempt of the world, innocence, purity, perseverance in the true faith, were the lessons she inculcated, and which were never effaced from their minds. After receiving the Extreme Unction, she entertained herself with her expiring Jesus in such sweet accents, that those who heard her, recognised them for "the inexpressible sighs of the Holy

Ghost." When life was almost extinct, she caused them to sing the *Stabat Mater*, to which she listened attentively, while her eyes seemed to glow with celestial fires. She was then wrapt in ecstasy, during which she was heard to say, "O my God, my children." The last interview she had with Mr. de Neuvillars, her husband satisfied her, as he promised to allow his children the free exercise of the catholic religion. He heard the last petitions made in his favour by his virtuous wife, and they were obliged to tear him from her room. As soon as he retired, she called for her confessor, and when he came, said to him, "The hour is come, my Father, pray to God for me, that he may pardon my sins." She heard the prayers of the agonizing read with all the joy of a blessed soul; and when the minister of God pronounced these words, "*Subvenite angeli Dei*," "May the angels of God come to meet you," she expired in the peace of the Lord, the seventh of April, 1616, in the forty-fifth year of her age. She was universally regretted, especially by the poor, to whom she had been a most tender mother.

MARY AMICE PICARD,

(*From the French of Abbe Carron.*)

CHAPTER I.

MARY AMICE PICARD, the subject of the present narrative, was born in the parish of St. Paul of Leon, in lower Brittany, on the feast of the purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary, 1599, of virtuous parents, who lived by the labour of their hands. She was only seven years old when, on hearing a sermon on the honour of virginity and glory of martyrdom, she felt a strong desire to give herself entirely to Christ, and petitioned him for these following favours: 1st. The grace to do in all things his blessed will. 2nd. The grace of perfect chastity to the end of her life. 3rd. That she might suffer the torments of the martyrs.

At the age of eight years she was put to service in the house of a man called Christopher Abgrall, where she was employed in tending sheep. In this solitary occupation, the Holy Ghost endowed her with a great spirit of prayer, which became her principal exercise and sweetest consolation. In the morning she used to unite her intention with all the masses which were celebrated in the neighbouring parishes, redoubling her fervour when the tinkling bell at the next church announced the elevation of the sacred host. At the end of five years the little shepherdess was obliged to return home to assist her mother, her father having long laboured under the pain of a sore leg

occasioned by the stroke of a hatchet. Mary Amice, greatly affected at his sufferings, obtained permission to make a pilgrimage of devotion to a place famed for miraculous cures, dedicated to St. Meen, bishop of Trequier, in favour of her dear parent, and the Lord recompensed her faith and confidence; for at her return she found the limb quite sound, though at her departure mortification was progressing. In thanksgiving for the favour, she used to visit this chapel as long as she was able every year.

On one of these occasions she met Father Quintin, of the order of St. Dominic, who lived in reputation of sanctity in the convent of his order, at Morlaix. This good religious, to whom the Lord had already manifested his designs on Amice, accosted her with "Good morrow, my daughter, do you love God?" "God may grant me grace to love him," replied she. "And to me also," said the father. "If you wish," said he, "I shall hear your confession; I know you intend to confess in our convent." "Oh father! who told you so?" asked Amice. "I am quite sure of it," answered he. Without farther explanation she made her confession: it really was her intention. Having finished it he gave her a cross, telling her to keep it while she lived, for a time would come in which she would want it much, but that God would be her protector.

Ever after this father took a particular care of the young virgin, and often visited and instructed her during her work. One day that he had spent two hours in this charitable employ, she said, as the hour of dining approached, "Father, we have no bread, or I would give you some; will you taste some unseasoned pottage?" He did so

most condescendingly, the homely meal well agreeing with his spirit of mortification.

Her father being seized with his last sickness, assembled around his bed, like all christian parents, his little family, to impart to them his benediction. After giving them most salutary advice, he thus spoke to Amice: "You, my child, will have to suffer great trials, of which people will form various opinions; but take courage in the name of God, and heed not what they say. When you will think yourself without resource, and totally abandoned, God will raise you up a protector, and some one will be found to assist you. Do not leave me, my child," continued he; "I leave the world without regret; it is time—there is nothing to be found in it but illusion and deceit; but let me be administered, for I shall die before day-break."

He received the holy sacraments very piously, and some minutes before his death said to Amice, "I see the holy virgin, my child; she comes all beautiful, and says with unequalled condescension, that the object of her visit is to conduct me before God. His judgments are terrible indeed; but you will pray for my acquittal at his tribunal.' The prayers for the agonizing were now recited, and after the good old man had said, "Lord, into thy hands I commend my spirit," he expired, as he had predicted, before the dawn.

Amice remained with her mother until she reached the age of 35 years, refusing several advantageous proposals of marriage. During this whole time she was never guilty of the least act of disobedience, and assiduously performed the most painful duties. But as these were very numerous, she was obliged to shorten her time

for sleep, in order to be able to assist every day at the holy mass. She spent the Sundays in continual prayer, scarcely departing from the church the entire day.

Being pressed to marry by her mother and other friends, she absolutely refused to do so, and patiently endured the injurious treatment which followed her refusal. God was her only resource. "They accuse me," said she, addressing this Lord, "with refusing to comply with their wishes from fear, and horror of a poor, and painful, and laborious life; but you know that I see no poverty except in a soul deprived of your grace. Send me all the sufferings you please; but grant me patience to support them. I consecrate myself to you; do what you please with your poor creature; I care not for my body, so that you preserve my soul. O glorious Virgin," she continued, "mother of mercy and compassion, pray for me; after God, you are my only hope. Blessed St. John, virginal disciple of a virginal God, protect your client: let the world exhaust its stratagems in vain; provided God is for me, who shall be against me?"

A conversation which her father held a little before his death mainly contributed to strengthen her resolution. The good labourer, seeing his wife greatly afflicted at losing him, said to her one day, "Why are you so dejected at my death? should we not be satisfied with the divine will?" "True," replied she; "but what will become of poor Amice, she does not disclose her sentiments to any one?" "Leave her to herself," replied he; "seek not to penetrate her intentions, it suffices that God knows them; it is to this good God you should commit all your children, particularly Amice." "All that is very fine," said again the

afflicted mother; "but she will perish in the corner of some ditch, having no friend to provide for her." "What do you say?" said the good Picard; "has then the Lord ever abandoned those who trusted in him? Indeed, you speak like a foolish woman." Then turning to Amice, "Let your mother talk as she pleases," continued he; "but for your part, my child, do what God shall inspire you with."

These last words were never obliterated from the mind of Amice, and increased the attractive she had long before felt for holy virginity. But her resolution never lessened the respect she owed her mother, and this woman, despairing of inducing her to marry, at length permitted her to follow in peace the call of God.

Amice only thought of advancing in perfection. She chose for her director, Father Guillerme, since grand vicar of Leon. This respectable ecclesiastic, having interrogated her on several points of religion, was amazed to hear a poor girl reply with so much discernment, and struck with admiration, he exclaimed with the prophet, "Happy is he, O Lord, whom *Thou* wilt instruct out of thy law."

The moment marked by God to try his faithful servant now arrived. She just entered her thirty-fifth year when he began to manifest the extraordinary ways by which he meant to conduct her. She spoke of the great things that passed in her soul to a young clergyman, whom she choose for her confessor in the absence of Father Guillerme; but he, being inexperienced in such matters, treated her as a visionary. She then consulted the rector of Guimilion, who judged differently of her, but resolved to use all necessary precaution

before he pronounced on the nature of the wonderful things she related to him.

In the year 1639, she had different celestial communications, which showed her more in detail the career of sufferings on which she was going to enter, and incited her to great fidelity to grace, and an entire abandonment to all the designs of God. Our Lord inspired her at the same time to offer him, for the conversion of souls, all she was to suffer. She made the sacrifice, and continued to renew it every day while she lived.

It would be hard to believe the wonderful things recorded of Amice, were they not attested by ocular witnesses worthy of our confidence. Among the rest, let us hear the bishop of Courrouailles speak of her. "Until the age of thirty-four, Amice lived without reproach in the practice of chastity, humility, obedience, and extraordinary charity, which, at the age of seven years, caused her to form a desire to serve God in virginity, and to endure the torments of the martyrs. We have learned that she had an extraordinary gift of prayer; in this holy exercise she spent days and nights without being able to close her eyes to take a little rest. The wicked spirits sometimes appeared to her in the form of executioners, and, on the vigils of the martyrs, inflicted on her the torments undergone by these servants of God." So far his lordship.

It is said by one of her historians, that after having borne several days the marks of the wounds she had received, they were miraculously healed. Seeing her father's prediction, as to her sufferings, about to be accomplished, she thus disclosed it to a lady who was her intimate friend: "Madam, you will soon be shocked at what will be said of me: they will tell you I feast and

banquet privately, while I seem to fast: they will cast me out of my lodging; my director will abandon me, and I shall be deprived of the consolations of heaven, as well as those of earth; but one person will assist me, and after a short time the Lord will manifest my innocence. Mind, do not divulge one word I say." The lady said she would tell her husband, because, if things fell out as Amice predicted, she thought it would be advisable to have another besides herself who could testify in her favour.

Amice had for some time dwelt in St. Paul of Leon, at the house of Madame Lenondrain, and after, with the Ursuline nuns; but though the community were greatly edified, yet, considering the extraordinary things which passed in her soul, and the concourse of persons whom her reputation for sanctity attracted to visit her, it was deemed expedient to lodge her elsewhere. Her friends, in consequence, provided a room for her, and hired a person named Gabriella to wait on her.

This giddy creature Gabriella, unfortunately contracted a friendship for a servant in the neighbourhood, who used to steal wine, meat, and other provisions from her master, and then bring them to her, to partake in the spoil. As soon as Amice perceived it, she told Gabriella, that if she continued to act so unjustly, she would inform the grand vicar, or some ecclesiastical superior. "If you do," said the wicked girl, quite enraged, "I will tell every one that you yourself got a share, and that the wine was entirely for your use." Knowing that Amice was not to be induced to act against her conscience, and wishing, as they say, to have the first story, Gabriella addressed herself to a person, who, for four years past, had

plotted the ruin of Amice, and both concerted together how they should destroy her reputation. Together they invented the blackest calumnies against her; accused her of dissoluteness, hypocrisy, and every vice; and they succeeded so well in making people believe them, that every one held Amice in abhorrence. In a sermon preached at the cathedral, she was represented in the most odious light. Wounded in her honour and reputation, she at first abandoned herself to the bitterest grief; but soon animating her faith, she placed her shoulders cheerfully under the cross, and only thought of turning to profit the persecution raised against her. By an effort of heroic virtue, but which is more admirable than imitable, she proposed to her director, in expiation of the too great sensibility she at first manifested, not to deny the wickedness alleged against her. He forbade her to do so, and continued to console her, until imposed on like others, he gave credit to her calumniators, and would no longer hear her confession, nor allow her to communicate, even at Easter. But this was not all; becoming more prepossessed against her, he would no longer pay for her lodging, and she was turned out into the street.

The first part of her Father's prediction was now literally fulfilled; the second in a little time was also verified: for Abbé Poulpry, Archdeacon of Lyons, hearing of her melancholy situation, offered her an asylum in his house, not for a time, but during the rest of her life. The poor creature gladly accepted the kind offer, and continued till her death to experience the charity of the good Abbe. This was the person whom her father said Providence would send to assist her.

In the most trying circumstances, Amice did not allow the least murmur to escape her, nor

would she allow a word to be uttered against her calumniators; considering them only as instruments of divine justice to purify her on earth. She offered most fervent supplications for them.

During the persecution, Father Robert Cupif being nominated bishop of Leon, charged Father Louet, in quality of grand vicar, (for Father Guillerme, the former vicar, lost his confidence the very day he refused the Holy Communion to Amice,) to investigate the whole affair. In pursuance of this mandate, verbal processes were drawn up, and the innocence of Amice was fully established. Shortly after the unfortunate Gabriella perished miserably, after giving greater scandal. Father Guillerme having fallen sick, Amice begged she might be allowed to visit him, in consideration of the good offices he at first rendered her. He received her most cordially, and expressed his regret for having credited her calumniators.

The Lord raised up another friend to his servant, in Christopher Abgrall, her former master. This good old man, who seemed to possess all the simplicity and innocence of the first patriarchal age, was very charitable; he threw open his gates to the poor and the stranger, and being a linen draper, made it a rule to employ the poorest weavers, and to purchase at the fairs and markets from the most indigent, and at the highest prices. The Lord blessed him even in this world, every thing prospered in his hands, and he soon amassed the sum of £1200.

As he had not lost his esteem for Amice, he from time to time went to visit and console her. The last time he saw her, he melted into tears on bidding her farewell. A few days after, feeling himself extremely weak, his family proposed send-

ing for a physician: he opposed it, saying, a physician of the soul was much more necessary. Having received the Holy Sacraments of Penance, and the Eucharist, he begged to be anointed: they wished him to defer it, as there was no apparent danger; but he insisted, saying, that otherwise, he should die without its salutary aid. Before he expired, he exhorted his children to fear God, and love him above all things; to preserve peace among them, to be charitable to the poor, and continue towards Amice the good offices he himself was used to perform. Shortly after he breathed his last; and appearing the following night to Amice, all resplendent with glory, he exhorted her to suffer every affliction patiently, for that the greatest trials were light, compared with the glory which was destined to be their crown.

Amice found another resource in the person of F. Nobletz, a holy priest, whose name will in Britany be ever held in veneration, as also in a little child, who was brought up in the house of her principal friend, Abbe Poulpry. This young saint was very fond of Amice, and He "who produces perfect praise from the mouth of infants," caused this little one to utter such things as greatly consoled the pious sufferer.

But having passed through the crucible, and being found without alloy, the Lord now held forth to view the promised inheritance, and after having given her an occasion of adding a new gem to her crown by the death of her good friend and confessor, he revealed to her that she would die on Christmas-day. She received the last Sacraments 21st December, with such lively faith and love as affected all present.

Having petitioned our Lord for a share in his

sufferings in the garden of olives, she began to feel such a desolation and abandonment as we cannot describe. Struck with a fear of the divine judgments, she at intervals exclaimed, What shall I, poor sinner, say to my God when he shall demand an account of my actions and the fruit of the graces conferred on me? You have, said one who witnessed her terrors, to do with a God who is goodness itself. Ah! but he is just, said she. Is he not as merciful as he is just? said they, and He has not forsaken you from your cradle. Ah! said she, that is what makes me tremble. But you have suffered many martyrdoms for his sake. O, she replied, these give me no assurance whatsoever. To these fears succeeded frightful temptations against faith; but they did not continue long, and peace was restored to her soul.

Next day the bishop came to give her his benediction, and recommended himself and his diocese to her prayers. "May our Lord recompense your charity," said she, "in coming to visit a poor creature like me; may he enable you to walk in the footsteps of your pious predecessors for his greater glory, your salvation, and that of all under your care."

The little Lucas, of whom we spoke before, now said, "Farewell, dear Amice, "I shall soon follow you, and be interred near you and Father Treboddennie, my godfather." This happened as he predicted.

Christmas-day she contrived to kneel, and about seven o'clock in the morning, after continuing for some time to make acts of faith, hope, love, and contrition, she expired while invoking Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, in the year 1647.

She was interred in the cathedral; the bishop, with all the clergy, secular and regular, attended

her funeral. The concourse of the laity was immense; all testified their desire of touching her remains, or of having something which had been in her use.

How well does the Lord know how to reward His servants! How faithful is He in "giving them for former reproach, a crown of praise and a garment of glory!" To Him be honour, praise, and love, world without end. Amen.



MADAME ELIZABETH RANQUET
DU CHEVREUL D'ESTURVILLE, MATRON.

FROM THE FRENCH OF ABBE CARRON.

ELIZABETH, daughter of Peter Ranquet, and of Margaret Loret, persons as distinguished for piety as for birth, was born at Paris, 24 June, 1618. The grand children of Madame de Mercœur, the most virtuous princess of her day, answered for her at the sacred font. It was principally to this lady she was indebted for her education. When she was capable of receiving instruction, she caused her to come to her every morning, that she might learn her prayers, and the elements of religion. She often made her renew her baptismal vows, and taught her how to keep them, by shunning vanity and all the works of the devil, and practising humility, simplicity, obedience, and all virtues. Elizabeth profited so well by these lessons, that her mistress augured for her the greatest things. She was not deceived—the little girl became a prodigy of virtue. Deeply affected with the solemn engagements we contract at the font of baptism, she detested vanity in dress, shunned the world, and avoided dangerous amusements. Her father wished her to learn dancing, as being an innocent pastime in itself; but she reminded him that having been born on the feast of St. John Baptist, who lost his life by means of a dancer, she wished never to dance. He was too pious to press her more on the subject, so

she was left to follow the movements of her devotion.

Madame de Mercœur earnestly wished that her cherished pupil should embrace the religious state; but God had other views, and ordained that Elizabeth, after being the model of virgins, should become that of wives and mothers. A short time after the death of this pious duchess, a worthy gentleman, Nicholas du Chevreul d'Esturville, demanded and obtained her in marriage. This union, formed by the purest motives, could not fail being happy; it indeed was so—never were two hearts more perfectly united. At the birth of her first child, Madame de Chevreul took it in her arms, and offered it to God with great fervour. She always conserved this salutary custom, which is as worthy of imitation as that other of nursing her children herself, and not delivering them to the care of strangers. Perhaps it is not generally known or remembered that a child imbibes the dispositions of its nurse; if these are vicious, sin and wickedness may be ever after entailed upon it.

With the most lively attractive for prayer and recollection, she exactly fulfilled the duties of her state, and thus joined the fervour of Martha with the contemplation of Mary. Her first care was to establish so great an order in her actions, that exterior embarrassments might not occupy too much of the time she desired to consecrate to Jesus Christ. Considering the education of her children as her principal duty, she committed it to no other. She reared them most carefully, never flattered their imperfections, indulged their humours, suffered them to indulge vanity in dress, or affectation in words or actions. Judicious without weakness—resolute without sternness—she united a mother's fondness to a father's care,

and gathered the happy fruits of her solicitude ; her daughters became models of piety and fervour.

Another family also, viz. her domestics, participated in her affection ; she provided for all their wants, and never refused them the just objects of their desires ; when sick, she herself waited on them. She was careful when they entered her service to discover how far they were instructed in the truths of religion, and provided for every deficiency in that point, which so many mistresses betray. She caused them to approach frequently to the holy sacraments, and kept them constantly employed, (yet without fatiguing them too much,) to prevent the bad consequences of idleness and inaction. She was inflexible on all that regarded modesty, never pardoning the least word or action contrary thereto ; her house resembled a religious community, rather than a secular establishment.

The time which she gave not to the care of her children and domestic affairs, was divided between prayer and works of charity. She bewailed the sins of others as her own, and spoke of God with apostolic zeal to the tepid and ignorant. She often washed and combed the poor orphans whom she fed at her door, made frequent distributions of food and raiment to the bashful poor, and rendered them services the most painful to nature. She provided for a poor girl deprived of reason ; she respected her, "because," said she, "foolish from her birth, she has never lost her baptismal innocence." She also instructed little children, and taught distressed young women to read, to write, and to work, to enable them to procure an honest livelihood.

Her humility equalled her charity ; many a visit she paid in secret to our Lord in his sanctuary. She often deprived herself of necessities for

the relief of the unfortunate; fasted, watched, performed vigorous penances, yet sought but God for witness of her pious deeds. With what submission, respect, and holy avidity did she not listen to the divine word; she could not imagine how any person would attempt to criticise or censure the ministers of the Lord. She was most obedient to her husband, beholding God in his person. Nothing was capable of distracting her in the church. She made her delight of the Holy Communion; when the Sacred Host touched her lips, she said, "My God, sanctify my tongue;" when it reposed in her heart, she added, "My God, sanctify my soul, that I may think only of you, and never speak but at the dictate of your Holy Spirit."

The days of communion she seemed to dwell in heaven. She was heard to exclaim, in the fulness of her gratitude, "O my Lord, may I be all yours, as you are all mine; imprint within me your love and humility, your purity, your every virtue!" She found great pleasure in reading the holy scriptures and other good books, and made them the daily subject of her meditation. From the consideration of the charitable Samaritan, she passed to that of the poor members of Christ, to whom she spared the confusion of exposing their wants by anticipating their requests. These piteous objects, who (to the shame of christians be it said,) often excite disgust in the beholders, were the objects of her tender charity.

Neither her prayers, austerities, or domestic duties diminished her strength; at the close of day she was to be seen as indefatigable as when the morning sun gilded the horizon. She rose at night to pray, and left her oratory quite bedewed with her tears. God never allows himself to

be surpassed in generosity: as our pious matron exercised herself in the most rigid macerations, she received great graces—soon she saw in all creatures but God alone. “If I ascend to heaven,” said she, “if I go down to hell, if I enter into my own heart, I find thee there, my God.” Her love for, and contemplation of Jesus Christ was so continual, that she spoke to and acted towards all as if she saw Him in them. She often said, “O my soul, bless the Lord, and render continual homage to his immortal greatness, his unbounded love.” She was most devout towards the Holy Sacrament; she remained some hours one day, expecting the return of a procession, prostrate before the divine object of her love. She composed many excellent prayers for herself from the holy scriptures and writings of St. Francis de Sales, and other fathers, in which she was deeply read. Hearing of her mother’s death, she addressed our Lord on the cross in the following strain, drawn almost word for word from the epistles of St. Paul: “King of heaven and earth! your ‘charity presses us’ when we consider that for us you have undergone the death of the cross, we should indeed live no longer but for you, who have died and risen again to save us. What wonder, then, that you have taken a life which belonged to you? May your holy name be blessed, O immortal King of ages, now and for ever.” After this prayer she tried to subdue too great sensibility, and recommending her mother to her children’s prayers, conjured them often to think on death, and not to be deceived by the devil, who makes it appear much more distant than it really is.

She was most devout to Jesus crucified, often kissed the cross which she wore with great devotion, and frequently imprinted the sacred sign of

redemption on her forehead and heart. She wept at the recollection of the cruelties Jesus Christ suffered thereon, and wished to share in them, attaching great value to shame and reproaches. She detested applause, was always humble and annihilated before God in his temple, remaining at the door with the publican, and esteeming herself the most wicked of creatures, however trivial her faults. The saints only love to speak of God and holy things. A hermit, who lived in the forest near Orriuebec, as fervently as the solitaires of Thebaide, often conversed with Madame Ranquet only on pious subjects. He discovered in her all virtues, particularly that of humility. She one day said to him, "It is very strange how all seem to abhor pride, and prefer humility in theory, but few practise it. Is it not pitiable that the greatest vice is the most common; all blame pride, and yet almost all are enslaved to it; all praise humility, and yet few seek to acquire it." The result of these reflections was a great spirit of humble obedience. She could not persuade herself to follow her inclinations, and said to the good solitary that she wondered how those who acted every day as they pleased, did not die of grief, since the only satisfaction of a christian should be found in obedience. She never complained of contradictions, and was always submissive to the order of Providence. "It is the will of God," she used to say, "that we respectfully submit to all that he desires of us. I am the servant of the Lord, may his will be accomplished in me."

But so pious a life was not to be protracted, nor the crown due to its merits to be long withheld. The constitution of Madame Chevreul was very delicate, and although taken little care of, bore up against the mortifications which she exercised;

but the fatigues which she underwent in attending her daughters when attacked by a dangerous fever, and some other sick persons, quite destroyed it.

After fasting during the Lent, she found her strength quite exhausted, and was obliged to keep her bed on Friday in Passion week. Her family were greatly alarmed; she wished to assist at Mass on Palm Sunday; but her husband seeing how ill she was, absolutely refused. Her only observation on the occasion was, that she was not worthy to bear the palm, that such an honour was due only to the conquerors of sin. Some poor persons whom she had liberally relieved begged to see her. When admitted to her bedside, she embraced them tenderly, recommended herself to their prayers, exhorted them to bless God in their poverty, and never to forget that their divine Master had been poor. The cleverest physicians were consulted for her; but she appeared indifferent to their services, and only entreated that her confessor should be sent for, saying, "That the soul should be first looked to, that sin was a thief in the house, a serpent in the bosom, that it wounded the soul and extinguished divine love." Having made her confession with many tears, she renewed the vows of her baptism, had the Holy Sacrifice offered for her intention, and received the holy viaticum. She used often repeat these words, "Why art thou sad, my soul? and why dost thou disturb me? Hope in God, for Him I will still praise; He is the hope of my salvation." On Good Friday she begged to be annointed; on this occasion, she said, "That the sign of the cross imprinted on the senses of the body in this sacrament, together with the sight of the crucifix, caused a dying person to participate

in the sufferings of his Master, and accomplished in him, 'by penance,' what is wanting, as the Apostle says, "of the Passion of Christ." After venerating the holy cross, and causing it to be venerated by all her attendants, she had her daughters called, to give them her benediction. When kneeling round her bed, she thus addressed them : "My children, engrave in your memory the last words of your dying mother. Remember during life, that your duty as Christians, is to 'live holily, justly, and piously, looking for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.' Love this blessed Lord with all your heart, never relax in your resolution to serve him, often think that nothing is worth regarding but eternity. Yield not to impatience in suffering, detach yourselves entirely from the creature, and labour courageously to acquire solid virtues. If you love God, you will certainly love your neighbour. Succour those who want your aid, relieve the poor and necessitous, pray for the afflicted. Be most strictly observant of modesty, avoid balls and such amusements, bridle your tongue, avoid vanity, combat your inclinations, love God, fear his judgments, obey your father, love your brother, and pray for me your mother, who give you my last blessing in recommending you to the care of the Most High."

Madame Chevreul then wrote to her son, to advise him, as she had advised his sisters, as also to recommend to him, if God called him to the married state, to observe conjugal chastity; and having offered his children at their birth to the divine Author of their existence, to bring them up in his holy fear and love.

One duty, and an affecting one, still remained; it was to console her afflicted spouse. This was no easy task, as he seemed to be abysed in grief.

She reminded him of their mutual promise to submit in all things to the will of God, and having induced him to do so, she sent for a worthy priest, who long enjoyed her confidence, and besought him to undertake the charge of ministering consolation to her afflicted husband. All her obligations being now fulfilled, she no longer thought but of God, no longer spoke scarcely but to express her regret for not having served him better. Sometimes she was heard to say, "I rejoiced at what hath been told me, we are to go into the house of the Lord." Her eyes were constantly fixed on heaven, till, while the priest was giving her the last benediction, on Easter Sunday morning, she bent her head and peaceably slept in the Lord.

Her pious death produced happy results. All who knew her desired to die like her, and for this purpose resolved to tread in her footsteps. The poor honoured her memory by their tears and prayers; her spouse consoled himself by the practice of those virtues of which he had in her such a model; her daughters, one in the cloister, the other in marriage, became her perfect imitators, and produced in themselves excellent copies of this excellent original.

She was buried in the church of Orriquebec, before the tabernacle, where she had often offered her heart and soul to Jesus in his own holy Sacrament.



THE LIFE OF THE VENERABLE MOTHER,
MARY BERON OF ST. MAGDALEN,

RELIGIOUS URSULINE AT PARIS.

CHAPTER I.

THOSE who know how to judge of solid virtue, will assuredly recognise that, under a life apparently common, Mother St. Magdalen was a living copy of the rules, and may be denominated the model of the religious of her institute. She was born at Chartres, September 10, 1581, and was the daughter of a physician of that city. While yet an infant, God miraculously preserved her from being smothered by means of her God-mother. The good qualities perceived in her while very young, sufficiently indicated what she would one day be.

Her mother, seeing her very promising, took great care to instruct her, and deeply engraved in her soul this important advice: "Rather die than offend God." One day, while walking with her companions, a person infected with fever approached her very closely; she felt greatly alarmed, and towards night perceived she had caught the disease; but having recommended herself to God, after spending the night in great pain and inquietude, she slept a little, and in the morning found herself perfectly well. Sometime having lost her good mother, the care of the household devolved on her; thenceforward all her inclination was for the service of God; so that her amusements were to visit

churches, her joy to receive the Holy Communion, and her delight to fast, to do penance, and attend sermons, to which she rendered herself so attentive, that towards the end of her life she repeated them by heart. She was at one time tormented by scruples, but was cured by her submission to Father Boette, dean of our lady of Chartres, to whom she made a general confession. He undertook the direction of her soul, and predicted to her the principal events of her life. The desire of being a religious occupied her for near fifteen years, though she had but a general idea of the happiness of that state. In six months she learned how to write perfectly well, to make use of it in some monastery; and having made choice of the Capuchinesses of Paris, she was presented to them immediately after her father's decease by her good confessor. These rejected her, imagining she was too advanced in life, (being then twenty-nine years old,) to accustom herself to their rule, which so annoyed M. Boette, who knew what a treasure she would prove to any community, that he said to them, "Well, then, you won't get her, I shall place her elsewhere." After saying this, he took her to Madame St. Beuve, who then directed the infant house of the Ursulines as foundress, and who, as well as the superior Mr. Geslin, was greatly taken with her. She felt that this was the place God had destined for her, and after the first visit could not restrain her joy from those she met. She was admitted soon after on the bourse of Madame St. Beuve, for which she ever after testified her gratitude.

Mary Beron was endowed with great bodily strength, a sound judgment, and an affectionate heart, very sensible to the miseries of others. She prized so highly the religious state, that she

endeavoured to prevail on her cousin to embrace it, but ineffectually. Her sister, seeing that the establishment of the Ursulines, as a religious congregation, proceeded very slowly, wished to persuade her to return home, or seek another place ; but she remained immoveable, and even then manifested a little of that firmness, for which, in after life, she proved herself remarkable. Her hope was not vain ; for some months after the arrival of the religious of St. Stephen at Soissons, twelve ladies of the Ursuline congregation being selected as the first *religious*, or twelve foundresses of the institute ; Mary was the fourth in rank. On St. Martin's day they received the habit, which caused her to take this saint for her particular patron, and she endeavoured so to imitate him, that every day of her noviceship she increased in fervour.

The superiors considering these first novices as the mothers of the institute, required of them an heroic virtue, and abundantly furnished them with the means, trying them by numberless penances and humiliations, of which our Magdalen received a large portion, because of her incomparable fervour, and strength of mind and body. After being two years tried in this way, her superiors expressed their entire approbation.

Being made mistress of the pensioners, she behaved herself with them as the angel guardians do with men—without losing recollection, and with a desire of preserving their innocence, and a sweetness and humility which caused her to render them every service. These little creatures debated among themselves who of them would come nearest to her, being attracted by the saintly odour which she exhaled. They had in her the most perfect confidence ; a lady of Paris who had

been in the class in her childhood, told the nuns, before the death of this good mother, that she used every night to tell her what she had been doing all day, and that she had no greater joy than to see her or hear her speak.

It was remarked of sister Magdalen, that notwithstanding the multiplicity of the affairs of the house, which was then a chaos in comparison of its present state, she was never anxious or troubled, but applied herself in silence and peace to what she had to do. Being cellarist, she lent a hand to every thing, and punctually obeyed a lay sister of Soissons who superintended the kitchen. When any thing was wanting, they blamed sister Magdalen, yet she remained unmoved, and whatever increase of work arrived, she was the same. Some were amazed at her recollection, for at that time the monastery being in its infancy, there was no distinction between the occupations of the choir-nuns and those of the lay sisters, all being indifferently obliged to pile up the wood, to carry manure to the garden, make the beds of the pensioners, &c. After her profession, at which she was preferred to two, and passed from fourth to second among the twelve foundresses, she strove to advance towards God as if she had hitherto done nothing for Him. She was the first mistress general of the pensioners, first depositaire, and portress, and assistant of the order. She sometimes had several of these charges at the same time without appearing embarrassed. She made up medicine for the pensioners, and was the first in the house who exercised pharmacy. She was indefatigable in all things, though much more active in mind than in body; but God, who preferred seeing her suffer rather than act, arrested her activity for some time by an attack of the

sciatique or hip gout, which, besides the excessive pains it brought with it, threatened to confine her to bed during her life. But mother Magdalen, already skilled in the art of divine love, kissed the hand that struck her, and having made a vow to St. Maur, promising to fast every year on his feast day, if he procured her sufficient to follow the rule she had embraced, she recovered so far as to be able to follow the community and observe the rule almost during her life.

CHAPTER II.

HER CONDUCT WHILE SUPERIORESS.

Eight years after the profession of the first religious Ursulines, mother Magdalen was elected superioress. She did all she could to avoid it, and after the election shed abundance of tears, so that they were obliged to command her to exercise the charge. She was near fainting on receiving the homage of the religious, and her mournful air sufficiently indicated how much she suffered. Like St. Bernard, she mingled at first too much severity in her government, fearing to relax regular observance; all her nuns were nevertheless persuaded of her good intentions, and that she sincerely loved them. One time, having imposed on a religious, a penance more rigorous than her fault merited, this nun manifested some coldness towards her, which being perceived by mother Magdalen, being now fallen sick she sent for her, and after testifying her friendship for her in a variety of ways, she committed all her papers to her care, as to one in whom she had most confidence, begging of her to burn them in case she died. While

she governed, she left the religious at full liberty to treat of their interior with the spiritual Fathers of the monastery. These were *always* the Jesuits ; she herself often consulted them.

While this vigilant superior laboured to advance the service of God, the devil set all his engines at work to annoy them. A Parisian, whose house was infected with the plague, sent his two daughters on pension to the Ursulines, to preserve them; but the oldest, after arriving there, was struck by it. Mother Magdalen suspecting the matter, could do nothing, for it was then late, except to forbid to all the entry to the Infirmary where the girl lay. Fearing to alarm the religious, she retired to the Dormitory, after leaving a lay sister to watch the invalid, but in a strange inquietude. Scarcely had she dozed, when a voice which she believed to be that of her angel, awakened her, saying, Arise, arise, it is no longer time to sleep. Having done so, she went straight to the Infirmary, where, having made a vow to St. Ignatius of Loyola for the preservation of the house, the invalid was removed from it before death, and all remained safe.

She never spoke of the providence of God over her monastery in these beginnings, but with a great effusion of tenderness. She said she could not detail His paternal bounty towards it, but that the religious could not be grateful enough for it. The most difficult affairs regarding the government of the house, occurred while she was superioress, and it was evident how perfectly she knew how to transact them. But if she was grieved at her first election, how much more was she afflicted, when, at the expiration of the three years, she was again chosen. Though she exaggerated her bad government to excess, and began to publish all her sins in full assembly, she was

obliged to hear the confirmation of her election. It was then she saw how exactly the words of a servant of God at her entry to the Ursulines were verified, *that she would be always in office*. Having resolved to bear this cross in a spirit of abnegation, and as if she loved it, she happily succeeded; the superiors advised her to moderate herself a little more, to render her efforts more effectual. One of them, F. Galemant, ordered her to communicate nine days successively, that being fed with the flesh of the Lamb, she might more abundantly participate in its divine qualities. She did so, and with so much profit that she appeared quite changed, and knew ever after to accommodate herself with the imperfect, as with the perfect among her religious. She became more cordial and compassionate, passed over things which were essentially trivial, but still retained her zeal for the observance of discipline. Her change was for others, for she still continued most severe towards herself. When she met opposition from any one, she prayed and exercised on herself great austerities, sometimes fasting two or three days a week on bread and water.

Mother Magdalen was superioress twelve years more, six years successively being elected by the unanimous voice of the chapter. She never left the monastery of Paris, except for three weeks, which she spent at St. Denis, to judge if a house could be founded there. She never engaged to found in the different other places, except in obedience to her spiritual guides, when she knew that they were likely to succeed.

In 1636, several communities being obliged to quit their monasteries because of the war between France and Spain, mother Magdalen received the Ursulines of Crepy, who were forty in number, in

the kindest manner, and deprived herself of necessities to make them comfortable; her religious resigned their beds &c. for their use, except a few novices, thereby practising poverty, charity, and hospitality. Some of these poor fugitives being fallen sick, saw mother Magdalen day and night at their pillow, rendering them numerous services, which she continued during the three months they remained.

When her own convent was said to be in danger by the approach of the enemy, she could not be induced to send home the novices, or the pensioners, and our Lord did not disappoint her hope. The number of the foundations of her institute increasing, gave more employment to this good mother; like the apostle, esteeming *herself indebted to all*, she endeavoured to *satisfy all* the superiors who solicited her advice.

Her zeal caused her to send two of her religious to join the Mother of the Incarnation, and her companions, who had sailed for Quebec the year before, from the Ursulines at Tours. She met great opposition on the part of their friends, though they were evidently called by God to the conversion of the little savages, but she happily triumphed over all; the archbishop having sanctioned the enterprise, as soon as the news of the happy navigation of the former religious arrived. She suffered immensely the whole year of their departure. Her life was once attempted, a musket being fired at her, while reading a letter at a window. She was evidently preserved by miracle, the ball having perforated the wall near her. Her pain was greatly alleviated, on learning that those dear sisters were safely landed, and laboured with the others most zealously, in cultivating the vineyard of the Lord in Canada.

In the last years of her superiority, the troubles at Paris reduced the monastery to great distress. She actually saw herself with the care of 120 persons, and without meal, or corn, or even money to purchase either; yet by her good management, the sisters were sufficiently provided with necessities.

Her last triennial cost her more to accept and accomplish than the others, because of her age and weak sight; yet she put her shoulders under the burden with such readiness, the better to follow the divine disposition, that the nuns were surprised. As her mind needed more repose, and that her body sunk under infirmity, and that she relaxed none of her austerities, she felt it much. However, she supported it cheerfully to the end, and joyfully quitted it, at the age of seventy-two years, to the great regret of her religious. Let us now consider how she discharged her other functions.

CHAPTER III.

OF THE OTHER CHARGES WHICH SHE EXERCISED IN THE MONASTERY.

In the intervals of the superiority of the mother of St. Magdalen, she was six years mistress of novices, once *Depositaire*, and twice *Assistant*. Her sweetness toward the novices was incomparable; she condescended to their inclinations as much as possible, and charitably supported their puerilities and ignorances, esteeming it a better plan, that they might gather more strength for the service of religion. Though her principal care was to form them to virtue, she did not neglect their health, nor any thing that concerned them. The

Spirit of God so animated the simple instructions which she gave them, that they had the desired effect.

She dispensed with their observance of the austerities of the rule when necessary, but she never dispensed them from being submissive, simple, punctual, mortified, and silent. How remote was she not from allowing them to run about, walk precipitately, or call persons at a distance. Desiring one day to correct a sister who sat in a position not quite modest in a religious, she desired another to kiss her feet at recreation, and thus reminded her of her fault. She used similar inventions to amend without painning them, and treated the weak among them at all times with peculiar condescension.

She received them not only with kindness and affability, but it might be said that she even divined their troubles, sometimes giving them remedies for them before they communicated with her. On one occasion she said to a novice, O my poor sister, how anxious the devil is to have you again in the world! which *was* the case, for she at once confessed she felt a great wish to return. The good mother having laboured hard for her perseverance, the novice made profession with great fervour, to her inexpressible joy.

It was edifying to see her in so advanced an age abase herself, if we might so say, to all the practices of these infant religious. She took part in all their penances and devotions; and during the advent made the nine prostrations every day with them, in honour of the abasements of the Word made flesh, though then scarcely able to walk. When giving them the spiritual exercises for profession, she endeavoured to follow them herself, to enter, as she used to say, into her first

fervour, which indeed was not necessary. She endeavoured to make them women of prayer; and though she felt their sufferings deeply, she rejoiced, nevertheless, because they obliged them to recur more to God.

To give these young persons a due esteem of virtue, she never spoke a word when they praised others for natural advantages; but when they lauded them for those of grace she became eloquent. Often after the reading of the meditation, being unable to restrain the interior fire which consumed her, she communicated it in most charming sentiments to her dear daughters.

Though often consulted by the superioress on all the affairs of the house, because of her capacity, she devoted some time every day to the instruction of the uneducated novices: they were most dear to her at all times. A religious, seeing her bathed in tears at the dismissal of a lay sister, expressed her surprise; but mother Magdalen said, How sister can you forbid a mother to feel, when her very bowels are torn from her!

To accustom her novices to spirituality, she used to teach them to draw from all things judicious reflections. Was there anything related by them, Well, my children, she would say, what does that teach us, what should we learn from it? If somebody's faults happened to be mentioned, Behold, would she say, wherewith to instruct us; behold what may teach us a useful lesson.

At the profession of a novice, her joy was as great as that of an ambitious mother, who would see her child placed in the most eminent post in the universe. She spent the three years that nearly preceded her death in the noviceship with as much equality of temper as if she were but forty years old. The community again wished to

make her superioress, but she contrived to elude it; however, they succeeded in making her assistant, in the exercise of which office our Lord called her to himself, as we shall now see.

CHAPTER IV.

THE DEATH OF MOTHER ST. MAGDALEN.

For a long time the practice of mortification prepared this good religious for death, separating her in such a manner from sensible things, that she was no longer bound to earth except by the union of her body with her soul. She was so disengaged from her relations, that one of her nieces being ready to enter the monastery with the consent of the principal mothers, she testified so much repugnance, that they let her go to another in quality of lay sister. After wearing the habit some time, she was dismissed by the superioress, though greatly indebted to her good aunt; but mother Magdalen never complained, and afterwards gave more marks of friendship to this religious. Another of her nieces having paid her a visit, she dismissed her after a quarter of an hour, saying she would recommend her to God. Though the sisters who went to Canada were infinitely dear to her, and that she heard from them but once a year, she acknowledged on the eve of her death that she had deferred to read the letters they had written to her six months before, until it was time to answer them.

She was no less dead to self than to creatures. Often in her illnesses she refused remedies, saying to her who presented them, Thank you, sister,

I only want Jesus Christ. So that Father St. Jure, Jesuit, said of her interior during the last year of her life, that it was in a state of perfect denudation, in which she sought and desired but God alone.

She used to spend the last three days of each month in preparing for death. She caused two religious to draw up the order of the exercises for this occasion, from which Father St. Jure, to whom it was submitted, took his design of his book of spiritual exercises for preparing for death. She finished this preparation on the Sunday which preceded her death; making, as usual, her confession of the month. No longer regarding death but as the means of uniting her to her Sovereign Good, the delay of it would be insupportable but for her submission to his blessed will. She commenced the fast of Lent, and continued it until the 27th of February, the day she fell sick. Perceiving her absent from the morning meditation, they went to her poor cell, where they already found her half dead, and almost without her senses. She was quickly carried to the infirmary, but it was evident her hour was come. She refused to allow a consultation of physicians, saying it was perfectly useless. She was offered some particular favours, but she generously refused every thing that was not common to all.

Having made great efforts to recover from her lethargy, she received the last sacraments, testifying that it gave her real pleasure to learn that her death was nearer than she thought. I don't fear it, said she, let us dispose ourselves; and taking the crucifix in one hand, and the image of the blessed Virgin in the other, she calmly ex-

pected its approach. Immediately after the Extreme Unction she lost her senses and speech, and a little after, while they recited the prayers for the agonizing, she sweetly breathed her last at 9 o'clock the 1st of March, 1657, aged 75 years, of which she had spent near fifty in the house, and worn the habit forty-four years.

She died as she had lived, in so perfect a poverty, that most of her effects were useless, and not worth giving to the poor. She had a presentiment of her death a year before it happened, from a noise heard over her cell by her novices. She herself heard it on another occasion, and was amazed, saying that the fracas of the city of Chartres, when besieged by the League, when several bullets entered the house she lived in, was not so loud.

When F. St. Jure heard of her death, he said he desired a similar end for all the religious of the monastery, and that her soul was attained to such a height of perfection that it needed but three days to separate it from the body, like a ripe fruit which falls from the tree the moment it is touched.

CHAPTER V.

A SUMMARY OF THE VIRTUES OF MOTHER SAINT MAGDALEN.

THE testimony of Father St. Jure to the perfection of this good mother, whom he had known and directed for so many years, will alone suffice to fill us with veneration for her memory. All her life was a course of virtue; she loved and pursued nothing else, but was in all circumstances a worthy superior and a perfect subject.

A zeal full of sweetness animated her conduct, while a wonderful prudence directed it. We cannot say with what ardour she laboured for the welfare of the institute. It was she who got the constitutions printed, and caused the rules, regarding the domestic order, to be drawn up on the model of the most ancient and modern of religious orders.

She zealously laboured to preserve regularity, and rather suffered a novice who had been a benefactress of the house to leave it, than allow the infringement of an important rule. When she met with subjects humbled for their faults, she placed herself below them to support their weakness; but if she found them haughty and untractable, she was inexorable until they submitted. She easily pardoned personal injuries; a girl having said very offensive things to her, as soon as she withdrew, the good mother warmly excused her as if she had received all possible friendship from her.

She was always ready to satisfy her religious and hear what they had to say. Notwithstanding the little contrarieties inevitable in life, this good superioress was so cordial that she possessed the hearts of all her subjects; there was not one among them who had not in her an entire confidence. Her vigilance was admirable in preserving concord and peace, without which a religious house is a hell, and in avoiding all that could diminish it. She was extremely interested for all that regarded the spiritual good of particulars, as well as of the monastery in general, and left no means unemployed to advance it. She was sick with the sick, and died with the dying, sparing nothing that could relieve or even recreate them. It was said she had a particular charm to

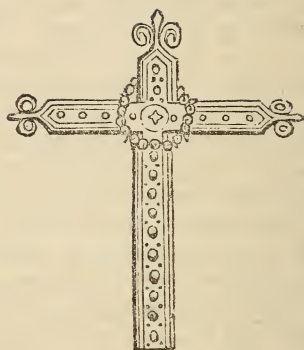
sweeten the bitterness of death; it seemed that she opened heaven so to the poor invalids, that they had no more to do than to enter it.

She established in her monastery the spirit of compassion towards the poor; she provided entirely for one reduced family. Often she sent her dinner to the needy while she was superioress, particularly when something extraordinary was served up, saying, "that such meats were not fit for her." When Picardy was desolated by famine and the sword, she sent thither a greater supply of necessities for the poor than was received from any other monastery.

In her intercourse with seculars, which was as limited as possible, she principally studied to inspire them with a love of virtue and a horror of vice. She at first entered into their sentiments, and then, having gained their hearts, they opened themselves entirely to her, so that she was enabled to remedy their spiritual miseries. One time she converted a woman of very bad life by this means, and another time reconciled two married persons who had been for some time most cordial enemies. Her natural prudence was perfected by long experience by the good advice she took, and the lights of the Holy Spirit. It appeared in employing her religious according to their talents, in discerning the attrait of God in souls, in her inviolable secrecy and in seasonably reprehending their faults.

The principal virtue of mother Magdalen, as inferior, was the study of all the occasions of practising virtue, and fidelity in embracing them without singularity or affectation. She had an insatiable hunger for obedience, patience, mortification, humility, and the other religious virtues. At prayer her countenance was all inflamed, and seemed to emit rays. In action she was always

seen attentive ; to please God she sought but Him in all she did. She went to prayer from the most complicated business with as great recollection as from a spiritual entertainment. She dissembled what she suffered from tooth-aches until she lost all her teeth by excessive pain before she reached the age of fifty. Her mortifications were rigid ; she warred continually against the senses, and seldom approached the fire, saying, "That nothing inconvenienced her but her sins." All her movements were perfectly well regulated, the Spirit of God dwelt on her tongue. She avoided equivocations most carefully, and, except when bound by her office of superioress, totally abandoned the parlour, loving to "live hidden with Christ." She was always seeking her own abasement. When an occasion offered, she delighted to acknowledge that she was a poor girl, according to the world, and that she had nothing to boast of, save that she was a daughter of religion. There is no act of humility which she did not exercise ; one of them has caused us the loss of the papers on which she had traced her sentiments—she burned them eight days before her death. We conclude by citing the testimony of Father Lallemant, S.J., regarding her, viz. "That he felt as happy in knowing M. Magdalen, the second foundress, as he did in knowing the first."



THE

LIFE OF FATHER LEWIS LALLEMANT, S.J.

*From the French of F. Peter Champion, of the
same Holy Society.*

FATHER Lewis Lallemant, of the Society of Jesus, was born at Châlons, in the Province of Champagne, about the year 1578. His father sent him, while yet a child, to the Jesuits' college at Bourges. He was endowed with all the qualifications of grace and nature necessary for the accomplishment of the great designs which God had upon him; an excellent understanding, a solid judgment, a mild and agreeable temper, a great love for study, an extreme horror for sin, an exalted idea of the service of God, and a particular attractive for the interior life.

Child though he was, he practised interior recollection without knowing it. It is necessary to remain *within*—I should not, at least, wholly *go forth*—was a maxim he learned even then of the Holy Ghost, and it was so deeply engraved in his young heart, that he held a continual watch over himself, and avoided nothing so much as effusing himself on external things. Having a great devotion to the blessed Mother of God, he entered into the congregation established in her honour in the college at Bourges; this was his first novitiate for the religious life which he already resolved to embrace when his age permitted.

The idea of perfection which God had developed before him incessantly presented itself to his

mind, and appeared so charming and so amiable that the desire he felt for acquiring it, sometimes when at recreation with his companions, caused him such transports that his countenance became inflamed, his eyes sparkled, and he was obliged to withdraw and abandon himself in secret to the movements of grace. Having completed his course of humanity and one year of rhetoric at Bourges, his father sent him to Verdun to spend a second year in studying this science. He did so with great success, and having petitioned to be received into the Society of Jesus, he was admitted into the noviceship of Naney, 10th December 1605, being then in the eighteenth year of his age.

God, in his great mercy, inspired him from the commencement with a correct idea of the perfection St. Ignatius proposed to his children in Christ. The life and conduct of this holy Patriarch was the model he chose to imitate, and he endeavoured so earnestly to mortify the activity of his mind and to subject to grace all the movements of his heart according to his example, that his former acquaintance were amazed to see that he had acquired in so short a time that peace of mind and equality of temper which is the accompaniment of a consummate virtue.

After his noviciate, F. Lewis studied philosophy, and afterwards theology at Pont-a-Mousson, a continual sickness of the head and stomach, with which he was troubled, not allowing him to be employed in the regency of the lower classes according to the custom of the Society. He made his solemn profession of the four vows at Paris, 28th October 1621. He taught in divers places the speculative sciences during the space of twelve years, and was afterwards for four years rector of

the noviceship and master of novices, three years director of the second noviceship and prefect of the higher classes, and some months rector of the college of Bourges, in which he himself had received the first rudiments of learning. Behold the suite of his employs, of which he so perfectly acquitted himself, that he may be ranked amongst the most illustrious subjects of the Society. But though fit for all, it is nevertheless true to say, that the government and direction of souls was the function for which he had received most talent, as we shall now show.

The divine Spirit, who wished to make of Father Lewis an accomplished director capable of forming a number of others, not only served him for principal master in the spiritual life, as we before remarked, but inspired him with a particular devotion for His adorable person, discovered to him the most hidden mysteries of grace, and communicated to him His precious gifts with such liberality as He only uses towards those whom He designs to raise to a most eminent sanctity.

Thus the fear of the Lord, which is the basis of the spiritual edifice, was deeply engraven in the soul of this father, and accompanied by the other virtues which it invariably introduces and conserves—humility, purity, mortification, and disengagement from all things earthly. The knowledge he had of his nothingness, of the corruption of his nature, of the greatness of God, and the creature's consequent dependance, held him in continual abasement before this great Majesty, caused him to love his own abjection, and lose no occasion of practising humility. The annihilation of God the Son in the incarnation was his model of self-abasement, and the Sacred Heart of the incarnate Word, the school wherein he learned how to put it

in practice. In this divine academy it was that he learned to forget himself, to remain buried in the ruins of his own nothingness, so that he no longer spoke or thought of what regarded him, no more than if he had not been in existence, unless obliged by necessity, or carried to it by an impulse of grace. His interior and exterior exhaled nothing but humility; all he did was done without precipitate eagerness, and as if he wished to conceal it from himself. Being a declared enemy to ostentation, he delighted more in co-operating secretly in the good works wrought by others, than in undertaking them himself; although he appeared not in their execution, he often had the greatest share in it, either by his cares or advice. He judged that superiors should thus act towards their inferiors, interesting themselves in their labours, favouring their enterprises, employing them in the occasions which offer of procuring the glory of God, and not wish to do all alone, thus charging themselves with a multitude of external occupations, which often hinder them from applying as much as is necessary to the government of the house. He said that inferiors, too, were hereby encouraged, seeing themselves assisted in their functions by those who hold the place of God in their regard.

The spirit of filial fear which Father Lewis possessed from his infancy, was the faithful guardian of his baptismal grace, and the divine conservator of his chastity. The father, who heard his general confession in his last illness, a most pious and prudent soul, protested afterwards that in case of necessity he would not hesitate to prove on oath that Father Lallemand had never committed mortal sin, and possessed chastity in such perfection, that he seemed to hold nothing of

original corruption, and never had a temptation contrary to it.

It was a leading maxim with Father Lewis, that a person makes no proficiency in virtue, but in proportion as he advances in purity of heart, which is the shortest and surest way to arrive at the divine union, and the infallible means of disposing one's self for divine communications; hence there was nothing which he more earnestly laboured to acquire. It was for this end he unceasingly watched over his interior, that he so carefully examined the movements of his heart, and had such frequent recourse to the sacrament of penance. Daily confession was one of the points he most recommended to such among the community as he saw touched with a particular desire of their perfection, and it was his wish that they should accuse themselves in the sacred tribunal of the least irregularity, and render an account there of all that concerned their spiritual conduct. It was his own practice, and as he invariably brought to confession all the dispositions required, viz. a lively faith in Jesus Christ in the person of the priest, a perfect confidence in the power committed to him, an humble and amorous contrition for his faults, a great zeal to atone for them—he sensibly perceived the effects of the sacrament, the proper grace of which is a great purity of soul.

He was so faithful to grace, that he never *deliberately* committed a single fault. As soon as he perceived a shadow of sin, he at once cut it short, and Father Rigoleuc testifies, that during recreation he was sometimes remarked to break off in the middle of a sentence in order to follow the interior light which manifested some imperfection in that which he was about to say.

So far from thinking of gratifying the body at the expense of the soul, he only studied to mortify it. It was said by his intimate friends, that his corporal macerations were above his strength, and mainly contributed to shorten his life. As for interior mortification, which is the noblest part of the spiritual sacrifice, he practised it without relaxation, rigorously combating all his inclinations, and subjecting them to the Spirit of God ; so that by a perfect victory over his passions, he arrived at that happy state of interior death, wherein nature being perfectly subject to grace, places no more difficulty in the way to that divine life which the Holy Ghost wishes to communicate to the soul.

This good Father was greatly in love with holy poverty, so abhorred by the world. He no sooner enlisted in the service of Him, who "being rich, made himself poor for our love," than he renounced all, save what was purely indispensable. The vilest and least convenient things were the objects of his choice ; the furniture of his cell consisted only of a poor bed without a roof, a table, a breviary, a bible, two chairs, a stool to kneel on, and three or four books with which he could not dispense. He delighted in being always in want of something, and concealed his wants and inconveniences more carefully than a miser hides his wealth, lest the charity of the superiors might deprive him of an occasion of suffering the effects of poverty. But he did not confine the exercise of this holy virtue to the renunciation of things merely external ; on the contrary, he carried it to the highest point to which it can ascend, a general disengagement from creatures, and that perfect nakedness of spirit, which, raising itself above the gifts of God, seeks Him alone,

beholds Him alone, and attaches itself to Him alone. It was by this means he attained so pure a love of God.

He was naturally courageous, and possessed of a firmness of mind superior to every obstacle; but his principal strength proceeded from grace, which investing him with the Spirit of God, caused him to undertake and suffer all for the interests of this adorable Being. And he felt this divine energy; for nothing was capable of arresting him, neither the difficulty of the enterprise, nor the opposition of the world, nor human considerations, nor the fear of bad success; it was enough for him to know that God willed something of him, to cause him to labour for its accomplishment, and make him rest satisfied of ultimate success.

Though his health was not robust he never spared himself, always laboured without relaxation in the discharge of his office, and in all occasions in which charity engaged him for the glory of God and the service of his neighbour. Fervour of spirit served him in lieu of bodily strength, and supported him in such sort that he was indefatigable in labour.

Patience and sweetness are the noblest and most solid proofs of strength of mind, and Father Lallemant excelled in both. He suffered with so good a grace, that no one could see he endured any thing. He was so far master of himself, that the least inequality of mind or temper was never remarked in him, and he possessed his soul in a peace which was even indicated on his countenance. The supernatural energy with which he was endowed, caused him to demand of God, like St. Ignatius, to be always contradicted in his designs, not only to have an occasion of suffering, but also that his enterprises might be so much

the more glorious to God, as they cost him more to bring them to a happy issue. For the space of three years he made applications to be sent on the foreign missions. That of Canada was the object of his choice, for though the conversions were fewer in that quarter, the labours were heavier and less splendid, and it contributed more than the others to the sanctification of the missionaries. But not being suffered to go there, he endeavoured at all times to procure it zealous labourers, and to render it in France all the services that depended on him.

The love of missions was generated by that piety, which causing him to regard man as the image of God, ornamented with the characters of His resemblance, and redeemed by the blood of his Son, inspired him with a sensible regret for his loss, and an ardent desire of procuring his salvation. This divine gift, as rare as it is precious, is particularly necessary to evangelical labourers, lest study and the bustle of exterior functions should dry up the heart, and leave it without interior spirit.

The unction of Father Lallemand's piety appeared in all his actions, particularly in those which immediately regard God; as the Divine Office, the Holy Mass, the Administration of the Sacraments; even in making the sign of the cross, or in taking the holy water he evinced a devotion equally tender as solid. He had no greater delight than in familiarly conversing with God, calling prayer the felicity of the earth, and devoting to it more time than to any other occupation; sometimes he passed whole nights in this sacred exercise. One day, being alone with one of his friends, he avowed that he had no difficulty in

raising his mind to God, that in fact it was as easy to do so as to take respiration.

Nothing affected him but the divine interest. His whole interior occupation was to discover in each particular thing the designs of God, and then offer himself to execute them according to the lights of grace, and by the spirit of Jesus Christ. He sensibly experienced the direction of the Holy Spirit, even before he attained that state denominated by mystics, passive and supernatural. Hence, when he went to this exercise, he found himself illuminated with a divine ray which showed him the subject and the division of points, and enabled him to form the acts, as he testifies in his writings. His great devotion was the Incarnate Word; all the powers of his soul were filled with the divine states and mysteries of His adorable person. That of the Holy Eucharist was the object of his particular devotion, and the most ordinary theme of his entertainments; in speaking of it he seemed to surpass himself. All his pious practices had reference to the Man-God, and the love of this blessed Lord was the principle of his whole conduct. Nothing rendered the virtues so amiable in his eyes as to regard them deified, as it were, in the person of Jesus Christ; even the most difficult, in this view, had for him particular attractives.

From his tender piety towards Jesus Christ proceeded that towards the Holy Virgin and St. Joseph, and to those angels who are specially devoted to the Word made flesh. He every day recited a part of the rosary of the mother of God; but he honoured her more by his sublime sentiments of love, esteem, and confidence, than by any outward practices. He had an extraordinary grace for inspiring all with devotion towards St.

Joseph, and he counselled those who wished to enter on the interior life, to propose to themselves Jesus Christ as the model of humility, the Holy Virgin as the pattern of purity, and St. Joseph as the example of the interior life. It was easy to perceive that such was his own practice, for he most happily expressed these blessed models in himself.

He every day performed four little exercises in honour of St. Joseph, whence he drew marvellous advantages. The first two were for the morning, and the other two for the afternoon. The first, for the morning, was an elevation of mind towards the heart of St. Joseph, to remark how docile it had been to grace; and then a look on his own heart, to acknowledge his infidelity and to humble and encourage it. The second was to consider how perfectly St. Joseph united the interior life with his external occupations, and observe in what he departed from this model. By this only exercise he made so great a progress, that towards the close of life he never went forth from his interior solitude, and his application to external things only increased instead of diminishing his union with God. The third was to consider the admirable intelligence this blessed saint had of the virginity and maternity of his holy spouse, and his humble submission to the angel's announcement of the mystery of the Incarnation. The fourth was to represent to himself the homage of adoration and love which St. Joseph rendered the holy infant, Jesus, and to ask a participation therein. Not satisfied with honouring this blessed holy patriarch during life, he desired not to be separated from him even in death, and hence when dying he besought them to bury with him an image of his beloved patron.

It was perceived on different occasions, that St. Joseph never refused him any favour which he asked; he himself acknowledged it to such as he wished to make devout towards him. Father Paul Ragueneau, and Father James Nouet, both regents of the lower classes in the college of Bourges, while F. Lallemant was rector, evincing great dispositions to virtue, he took a particular care of their spiritual advancement. One year as the feast of St. Joseph approached, having called them, he promised to obtain for them all they desired, through the intercession of this great saint; provided they exhorted their respective pupils to be devout to him, and to perform something extraordinary in his honour. The two regents promised, and induced all the boys of their classes to communicate on the festival, and then went to propose their request to the Father rector. Father Nouet begged the grace of speaking, and writing worthily of our Lord, but next day told F. Lallemant, that after more consideration, he judged that another grace would be more conducive to his perfection. The father replied, that no alteration could be made, and that the first grace which he had promised him was already bestowed, as indeed subsequently appeared in the writings of this Father; particularly in his great work of *the man of prayer*, or meditations on the hidden, public, and glorious life of Christ, which cost him several years' labour, and was concluded only a short time before his death. As to Father Ragueneau, who recounted this incident to Madame Marian, a religious Benedictine of Montmartre, he was not willing to tell what he demanded of St. Joseph. It is likely it was some interior grace which his humility obliged him to conceal, with

many other extraordinary favours, which he had received from heaven, for he was a perfect religious man, of a vast and comprehensive mind, a singular penetration, a solid judgment, an heroic courage, an holy simplicity, an admirable confidence in God, and a consummate experience in spiritual things, a man, in fine, entirely detached from all temporal interest, and who breathed nothing save the glory of God and the salvation of souls. He was one of the first missionaries of New France, and as we have learned of Fathers Poncet and Le Mercier, two holy religious who had been his colleagues in the ministry, the person who had best served the church of Canada, and most justly deserved to be styled its apostle. After repassing to France, to be Procurator of his dear mission, he manifested a great talent for direction. Providence committed to him a number of souls, many of whom were conducted by extraordinary ways; these he assisted by his letters and exhortations. Persons wrote to him from all quarters, and his answers conveyed the light and unction of the Holy Ghost into all hearts, until he died at Paris, the eighth of September, 1680, aged 75 years. But let us return to Father Lallemant.

This holy man was of the opinion of those who believe, that when the Incarnation of the Son of God was proposed to the angels, besides the homage they in common rendered to this divine Person, some of them devoted themselves particularly to his service, and that of his blessed mother; that they accompanied them during their mortal life, that they try to inspire us with devotion to these blessed Persons, and render us for this end all the helps they can. Hence it was that he specially honoured these holy spirits, and had made an alliance with them to extend, as much

as possible, the empire of Jesus and Mary. He never offered Mass without praying the angels of the Incarnate Word to accompany him to the altar, nor did he ever recite his office, without inviting such of them as form the retinue of the holy virgin, to join him in chaunting the praises of God.

As soon as he formed the design of entering our society, he regarded St. Ignatius as his father, entertained for him the love and respect of a true son, and recurred to him with confidence in all his wants. The gift of piety with which he was replenished, produced in him a perfect submission to his superiors, a fraternal kindness for his inferiors, and a paternal charity towards all mankind. It is this precious donation of the divine Spirit which perfects obedience, causing us to regard but God alone in superiors. Father Lalle-mant was truly in this disposition, he regulated his whole conduct by obedience, as the true interpreter of the will of God. To do so with more perfection, he followed the advice of St. Francis de Sales; "*Demand nothing, refuse nothing,*" not even permitting himself the least desire for, or repugnance to any thing, and was ever ready to do what was most distasteful and laborious. As soon as he knew the wish of the superiors, he never waited for an express command.

When master of novices, he most earnestly recommended to them the practice of this holy virtue; for five or six months successively, he caused them to make it the matter of the particular examen, saying, "*Dont be weary, my children, if I retain you so long in the virtue of obedience. If you can only become perfect in this, you will be assured of attaining an eminent degree of sanctity.*" His exactness in the observance of the rule proceeded from the same principle. As he

considered that they marked in detail what God required of him, he had them in singular veneration, and observed them with that affection which is peculiar to perfect religious.

But it is in his conduct towards his equals and inferiors, that his piety shone with most brilliancy; his charity having in an eminent degree all the qualities which St. Paul attributes to this virtue; no person could be more mild, more patient, more humble, more disinterested, more condescending. His natural affability, engaging manners, and rare modesty in his exterior deportment, mingled with sweetness and gravity, together with that divine, *I know not what*, which appeared on his countenance and in his words, gave him entrance to all hearts. No sooner had a person once spoken to him, than he eagerly sought his conversation and acquaintance.

He so well knew how to accommodate himself to the persons whom Providence caused to address themselves to him, to support their defects, to seek occasions of benefitting them, that by his patience and condescension, he absolutely became master of and quite ruled them.

However busily engaged, he received all who came with a smiling countenance and a kind heart; he seemed to have nothing to do but to hear those who wished to speak to him, and never appeared weary of their conversation, however importunate. Some of the Fathers who made their second noviciate under this holy director, as remarks F. Rigoleuc, were at first somewhat opposed to his sentiments, but his sweetness and humility wrought so far on them, that before the expiration of three months they were all perfectly satisfied, and said one to the other, that they had never seen so holy a Director.

God often permitted that some of those who

should have most kindness for him as superiors, or more submission and respect as disciples and inferiors, might forget themselves in his regard, and give him pain and annoyance; but so far from testifying resentment thereat, or uttering the least complaint, he more willingly and joyfully endeavoured to serve them. The greatest punishment he desired them, was their greater progress in perfection, and he one day avowed to a friend that this desire was so violent that it almost consumed him; it is certain that it more contributed than his rigorous penances to shorten his life.

A little time after he was appointed rector of the college of Bourges, a brother who performed the office of baker, one day, came and complained to him roughly that he was overburdened with work, and requested he would send some person to labour in his place. The good father after hearing him peaceably, promised to relieve him, and then went himself to the bakery, and began to kneed the dough with might and main. When the brother's transport had a little ceased, he returned to his employment; but what was his surprise on finding the Father rector supplying his place! Suffice it to say, that, throwing himself at the feet of his good superior, he sincerely repented of and demanded pardon for his fault.

Father Lallemant acted thus on similar occasions, saying, that every day's experience convinced him more and more that superiors ought rather make themselves loved than feared; that the means of preserving regularity is not severe penance, but paternal kindness on the part of the superiors, and their application in providing for the wants of those under their care, and in conserving them in the spirit of prayer and the interior life. His great talents gained him as

much esteem as his charity acquired him affection; for, besides his natural qualities of an excellent understanding, and a fund of good sense, together with the lights acquired by a profound study of theology, he was also wonderfully favoured by those internal illuminations, which God never fails to communicate to his ministers for their own conduct and that of others. What he says of the operations of the Holy Ghost in his *Spiritual Doctrine*, as collected by Father Rigoleuc, sufficiently manifests him one of those men, who have best understood the spiritual life. He spoke divinely of it, and those who made their third year of noviceship under his conduct, were amazed at the abundance of his lights; they could only proceed from, as indeed they bore, the marks of his union with God, for he had no leisure to study, and he spent so much time in praying and speaking to his novices, that scarcely had he any remaining to prepare the exhortations and discourses which he made them every day, and yet they were so excellent and so full of unction, that one would think he had done nothing but prepare them.

Hence it was that the most ancient and most spiritual among the Fathers were so charmed with Father Lallemant, that they would not wish to lose a moment of recreation, as he used when at it to speak much of spiritual things. One of the principal Fathers averred, that he never conversed with this holy man, without acquiring some new information; whether regarding the sense of the holy scripture, in which he was admirably versed, or some point of theology or spirituality. Father Julian Hayneuve, who by his writings and heroic virtues has merited the veneration of all, being rector of the noviciate at Rouen, while Father Lallemant was director of those who were

in the third year of their probation, wished to be one of his disciples, and assisted with the novices at his discourses, saying, that he could hear none such elsewhere.

It is incredible what weight his exhortations had, and what an impression they made on souls. That celestial gift which St. Paul styles *the grace of the word*, was eminent in him, whether for exhorting, or intimidating, or consoling. It was often remarked, that one sole word from him calmed a troubled soul, or vanquished an obstinate will. Some judged, and with reason, that F. Lallemand was among the Jesuits of France, what Father Alvarez had been among the Jesuits of Spain; by his practical knowledge of mystical theology, and the many interior men who went out from his school. It has been remarked, that all those who had made under him their first and second noviceship, have distinguished themselves by their religious conduct, and their spirit of recollection and interior life. He himself recognized that God had given him a particular talent for the direction of the members of the society, and avowed that he manifested to him, his designs on them, the hindrances they offered, and the road by which they should walk, in order to arrive at perfection. He used to say, that the sanctity to which they were called, surpassed all that can be imagined, and that he who saw the graces God has prepared for each of them, would imagine them destined for a St. Ignatius, or a St. Francis Xavier.

This good father was also endowed with an habitual gift of counsel or discernment, so that in all cases he could distinguish what was best and most suited to the circumstances of time and place, and the fittest to promote the glory of God. It was in consequence of this light that seven or

eight years before his death, he made a vow to do in all circumstances that which he esteemed most perfect. He said that what we should try to imitate in the saints is not that which appears most extraordinary, but their fidelity in following, in minor matters, the movements of grace; and that if we were equally faithful as they, we would excel them in merits, though we might not do nor suffer the same things. His manner of governing was wholly supernatural; he deplored the communities which were conducted by superiors full of human prudence; he styled it the ruin of obedience, and the destruction of that confidence which inferiors should have in those who hold in their regard the place of God.

He never precipitated any thing, never took a resolution without consulting the Holy Ghost, reckoning that an over earnest zeal which prevents grace, and a fervour too ardent which pays not sufficient attention to the interior light, is one of the defects which most hinders the operations of God in souls, and prevents the gospel labourers from reaping the fruits of their ministry.

Father Lallemand was never known to commit a fault against prudence, and possessed in a great plenitude, the gifts of wisdom and knowledge. Few have more deeply penetrated the mysteries of the Man-God. In fact, he could say, like St. Paul, that he had received the grace of manifesting to men, *the incomprehensible riches of Jesus Christ*. He did not stop at the external of these holy mysteries, as is generally done. The gift of understanding enabled him to penetrate the spirit, and manifested to him the admirable dispositions of the interior of Jesus, his blessed mother, and the saints. The high opinion he entertained of the Holy Virgin, was founded on what he had

discovered of her incomparable perfections, and the wonders operated in her from the moment of her immaculate conception, and during her life ; but especially when raised to the divine maternity at her annunciation. He supposed that she has not only been preserved from original stain, but even from the obligation of contracting it.

Among all the saints he was most devout to, and knew most of, were St. Joseph and St. Ignatius. It would seem that the latter had communicated to him a portion of his spirit, and enabled him to impart it to his children. He used to say that what the world knew of the graces and virtues of this great saint, was almost nothing in comparison to the perfection of his interior and that fund of grace which was hidden, as it were, in the bottom of his soul.

He possessed a particular grace for penetrating the sense of the holy scripture, and explaining it to others ; he incessantly studied it, but it was rather by the way of prayer than by interpreters. He sometimes demanded of our Lord, for the space of a year, the meaning of a single passage in the sacred volume. Nor was the gift of intelligence confined to divine things, although they may be deemed its principal object ; it also extended to human ones, to discover in them the designs of God, and their connexion with, or opposition to His reign in souls : pure and recollected souls can alone enjoy this favour. As Father Lallemand had God in view in all things, the divine presence, together with the purity of his intentions, served him as a torch to penetrate the artifices of the human mind, and to discern the designs of God from the intrigues and interests of men, and to distinguish in each circumstance what came from the creature, from that which proceeded from the Creator

He maintained that those who closely observe their interior, and vigilantly watch over the movements of their heart, have a great facility in penetrating the hearts of others, whether as a recompense from the Lord for the study they make of their own interior, or that the experience of what they feel in themselves, enables them to judge correctly of what passes in others. According to this principle, it is no wonder that he himself penetrated the secrets of hearts. One of our society has deposed that being at confession with this holy man, he mentioned to him a sin of which he had neglected to accuse himself, and that another time he declared to him the ideas which filled his mind, together with all the particularities of a temptation which assailed him.

Another having gone to declare to him a secret wound of his soul, was so overcome by shame on entering the chamber, that he changed his mind and began to speak of something else ; but Father Lallemant, who knew all, replied as distinctly to the object of his visit, as if he had entirely manifested it. In this manner he preserved several of his spiritual children from the dangers into which they were ready to fall, confirmed others in their vocation, and rekindled the fervour of those who began to wax cold in the service of God.

The gift of wisdom perfects that of understanding, giving to it an unction, without which all intelligence would be dry and barren, as this good father experienced. The unction of the Divine Spirit taught him all things, and the visions and celestial sweets with which he was often favoured in prayer, and during the divine Sacrifice, developed before him what our mysteries have of most concealed.

One night our Lord having awakened him, saying, It was then the hour on which the mystery

of the Incarnation was accomplished, and that he ought to dispose himself to participate in the grace conferred on the Holy Virgin in this mystery, he immediately rose and commenced his prayer, in the fervour of which he felt as if interiorly invested and all-penetrated with the Man-God, by an intimate union which purified his body and soul in a manner quite inexplicable. At the same time the Holy Virgin appeared, and calling him by the appellation of son, assured him that she tenderly loved him, and exhorted him to be singularly devout to the Sacred Humanity of her divine Jesus, which was, she said, almost forgotten by mankind. Whereupon he took the liberty of asking her for two favours; the first, that he might be always mindful of her, for it pained him to pass any length of time without remembering her; the second, that he might never be separated from that adorable Humanity, to which he had undeservedly consecrated himself. The Blessed Virgin promised him these graces, and in effect he ever after equally enjoyed the presence of Jesus and Mary.

By this promise of the Blessed Virgin, he subsequently repulsed a temptation of distrust, with which he was molested; but afterwards reflecting on the confidence he felt in this promise he became disquieted, until the Holy Virgin reappeared and assured him that his hope was not presumptuous, since it was founded not on himself but on the grace she had promised to obtain for him, and that these sort of promises are always conditional, and suppose the fidelity of those to whom they are made, to which, if he were wanting, he would have great reason to fear being lost, notwithstanding the graces she had obtained for him.

During the third year of his noviceship, our

Lord gave him a second angel of a superior order as master and conductor in the spiritual life. One of his angels, or a saint, sometimes awakened him at night, and invited him to pray ; generally it was our Lord himself, or St. Ignatius who did him this favour. This blessed founder miraculously cured him of a disease he had while studying philosophy, and during his second noviceship, obtained of God his entire deliverance from a continual head-ache which he suffered since the ninth year of his age.

Being one day attacked by a violent temptation, he had recourse to prayer, whereupon St. Teresa appeared, and having chased away his enemy, restored peace to his soul. Another day, while praying in the church of the noviceship at Rouen, St. Joseph visited him and conferred on him great graces which have never been made public, no more than an infinity of other celestial favours which consoled him in his pains, fortified him in his labours, and supported him in the enterprises which he undertook for God's greater glory, and the good of souls. It is certain that he had several revelations as to the state of the souls in Purgatory, that he witnessed their sufferings, knew the cause of their pains, and often had the consolation of seeing the pomp of their entry into heaven. That some saint, for example, St. Ignatius, presented to the Holy Virgin the soul of one of his children just emerged from this place of pain, that she presented it to our Lord, that He graciously received it and placed it on a throne of glory, to the great joy of all the heavenly host.

The prayers and other spiritual exercises of this holy man were generally accompanied by celestial consolations. He faithfully practised what he so earnestly recommended to others,

viz. to abandon himself entirely to the conduct of the Holy Ghost. He did so in his infancy, and his whole life was but a perpetual act of dependence on the direction of this Divine Spirit, who, having filled him with his gifts, rendered him most pliant to all his movements. The interior law which this divine person of the Trinity had engraven on his heart, was his principal rule; he followed it in all cases, and never acted but by it. His whole conduct was supernatural; his sentiments, words, and actions, appeared to come from a fund wholly possessed by God; not a single defect was remarked in them. His interior and exterior perfectly corresponded; his interior life was hidden with Christ in God; and the spirit of this divine Saviour was manifested in his exterior life as in a mirror, so that no person could look upon him without being touched with devotion.

He has passed without contradiction for one of the most perfect Jesuits of his time, and the most filled with the spirit of our holy founder, St. Ignatius. The superiors of many religious orders, particularly those of the Carmelites and the Visitation Nuns, as well as the greatest spiritualists in the places where he abode, held a close and holy intercourse with him and consulted him as the oracle of the Holy Ghost, on their own conduct and that of those whom they directed. All his disciples, particularly F. John Joseph Surin and F. John Rigoleuc, esteemed him a saint. The writings of both these holy men sufficiently attest that they had perfectly imbibed the spirit of their good master; we have never met any one who did not speak of him with admiration. His reputation passed into foreign countries. Heaven miraculously disclosed his merit to Mother Louisa of the Ascension, a religious of St. Clare, who then lived

at Carion in Spain, filling mankind with amazement at the wonders which grace operated in her, having beheld in spirit the great height of perfection to which Father Lallemand was raised, she desired to form with him a holy intimacy, and on meeting some persons who were going to Rouen, she begged them to salute the holy man on her part, and recommend her to his prayers.

It were desirable that God might have prolonged the life of this good father to old age, as the interests of his kingdom seemed to require; but the divine judgments are inscrutable, and he decreed to call him to himself in the prime of life. The superiors, remarking that his great labours in the noviciate of Rouen completed the destruction of his health, made him prefect of the higher studies at Bourges, and afterwards rector of that college; but during the whole time he only languished for death, regarding it as a passage from this state of corruption, where *the law of sin* reigns in spite of us, to that happy liberty where the sight of God renders man impeccable. In his last agony he took in one hand his crucifix, and in the other the image of the Holy Virgin, and alternately gazed at both with such love and confidence as moved all present to tears, and in these pious sentiments breathed his last sigh on the 5th of April, being Thursday in Holy Week, 1635, in the forty-seventh year of his age, of which he spent twenty-nine in the society.

When the news of his death was spread through the city, all ran to the college to get a sight of a person whom they considered a saint. His funeral was performed with great solemnity. Different revelations have been received of his glory, and many favours received, it is believed, through his intercession.

PAUL KOTSKA, BROTHER OF ST.
STANISLAUS.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH OF ABBE CARRON.

PAUL KOTSKA, born in the year 1548, was the eldest of the children of John Kotska, senator of Poland, and of Margaret Kriska, sister of the Palatine of Masovia. As soon as he was capable of applying to study, his parents confided him and young Stanislaus his brother (now canonized) to the tutelage of a governor called Bilinski, under whose conduct both were sent to the Jesuits' College at Vienna. During their residence there, Paul evinced dispositions very unfavourable to virtue, though all about him exhorted to its practice: the college being suppressed, the students were scattered through the city, each one having chosen a lodging according to his taste; Paul, vain and foolish, did not hesitate to select his rooms in the house of a Lutheran, because it was situate in an agreeable quarter of the city; and Stanislaus's wise and religious remonstrance on the bad example thereby given, was lost on him, so that he was constrained to obey. Paul, who loved the world and its fashionable follies, now delivered himself wholly to their pursuit, being no longer under any restraint. It is true he had Bilinski still as guardian, but unfortunately, the tutor was equally fond of pleasure as the pupil, and found his account in allowing him to indulge his inclinations. Poor Stanislaus could not witness this disorder without extreme pain. He did all he could to reclaim his brother,

but seeing that instead of gaining Paul he only irritated him, he resolved, though obliged to live in the same house, to have no more commerce with him than necessity and civility required.

The piety of Stanislaus was too much opposed to Paul's manner of living, not to become annoying to him by the remorse it occasioned. He no longer regarded him but as a troublesome censurer, for his pious exercises and deportment were a secret condemnation of his libertinism, and so enraged did he become, that he heaped on the young saint all sorts of outrages and affronts, in which Bilinski seconded him. Seeing that their efforts were unavailing to diminish the fervour and fidelity of Stanislaus, he beat him so cruelly and so often with a stick during two years, as brought the poor child to the gates of death. He recovered, and his renunciation of the world to embrace the order of the Jesuits, was followed by the conversion of Paul.

Having made a spiritual retreat, he came forth with every demonstration of being quite changed, but it was not lasting. Some years after the death of Stanislaus, and when his reputation for sanctity began to spread, it was that Paul, touched by divine grace, and affected by the recollection of his brother's example, gave himself in earnest to God. Destined by divine Providence to arrive at great perfection, there was always found some invincible obstacle to his establishment in the world; but from the moment of his entire conversion, he renounced all ideas of marriage, not wishing to divide a heart which belonged to God alone.

He chose to live in solitude, which occasioned him many reproaches and railleries from his friends. "What sort of devotion is it," said they,

“to renounce every sort of office in the state, and thereby sacrifice your own interests, and those of others?” This reasoning recalled to his mind the arguments he had formerly employed with his brother, and he joyfully made use of the answers that holy child then made him, telling his friends, with great mildness, he was sorry they had formed on him designs contrary to those of God, that it was impossible for him to yield conscientiously to their solicitations, that he cared very little about conserving his name on earth, provided it were written in heaven; and, in fine, that he desired no other glory to the house and family of Kotska, than that of imitating his brother Stanislaus.

In this manner Paul justified his conduct to those to whom he owed that condescension; as for what the world said of him, he minded it very little. It said he was not sincere, and that he would soon grow weary of his new manner of living; but grace acted on his heart so effectually, that its predictions were totally falsified.

Recollecting that in persecuting his brother Stanislaus, (to whose prayers we may ascribe his conversion,) he had imitated St. Paul, who persecuted the church of Christ, he conceived an holy hatred against himself, and an insatiable desire of sufferings. He often, to humble himself, related the cruel treatment he had heaped on him, and the patience with which he had borne it; every day he spent a considerable time in prayer before the picture of the Saints, shedding torrents of tears, and inflicting on himself great macerations. A young gentleman once secretly witnessed this mark of Paul's repentance, in the following manner.

Having gone to pay a visit of civility to a nobleman of the house of Lusea, and believing himself quite alone in his chamber at night after the

family had retired to rest, Paul remained in prayer for hours, and afterwards gave himself a severe discipline, while he exclaimed from time to time, "O my holy brother, pray for me, a poor sinner, and pardon me all I have made you suffer?" Then he retired to rest, without perceiving that in a little chamber contiguous, he was heard by a person of the family, who, not knowing him, thought from the extraordinary things he had witnessed, that their visitor had killed his brother, until the morning, when he was undeceived.

It was amazing to see how long and how earnestly Paul bewailed the follies of his youth. For forty years he continued to pass his nights in the manner described, sleeping on the bare floor, although he was now grown very infirm, and his body extenuated by fasting.

He usually resided at Prasniz, and he there founded an hospital, near to which he lodged, that he might serve the poor with his own hands. To their relief he devoted his whole fortune; his house was the refuge of travellers and poor pilgrims; he joyfully received them, washed their feet, waited on them at table, and at their departure, gave them an alms sufficient to enable them to pursue their journey.

He spent a long time each day in holy prayer, and recited the divine office continually. He rose at two o'clock in the morning, and after saying Matins, spent the rest of the night in profound meditation: he tasted the sweetest delights in this holy exercise; the mysteries of the Passion of Jesus Christ were his favourite subject. He every day heard several masses, and when travelling, he not only alighted at all the churches he met, but even at the different pious monuments, (in which the highways of catholic countries

abound,) he caused his carriage to stop, while he made his prayer prostrate on the ground. This attitude was usual with him at prayer.

He was now near sixty years old, and wishing to make his sacrifice complete, he formed the design of becoming a Jesuit. The Provincial of Poland, to whom he addressed himself, opposed his wishes, saying, he was now too old, and his health broken by austerities. Paul then wrote to the General of the order, who willingly offered to receive him, both in consideration of his brother Stanislaus, who was just then beatified, and of his own virtue; thinking that a saint, however infirm, is never useless in a community, since he can at least pray and suffer.

Our holy penitent lost no time in availing himself of the General's permission, and regulated so his affairs, that on entering the noviceship he would have nothing to do but to labour with new ardour for his perfection. But God accepted the good will for the deed; for having gone to Petricovie, to regulate something concerning his charitable foundations, he was taken ill and died there, leaving the people almost totally convinced of his sanctity. This idea was confirmed by a miraculous light, which environed his remains the night preceding his funeral. O happy penance! may we say, which merited and obtained for Paul such and so great a reward, even God himself!



CYPRIAN MOREL ;

OR, THE VIRTUOUS MERCHANT.

Translated from the French of Abbe Carron.

CYPRIAN MOREL had the happiness to be born of upright and religious parents; two holy priests, his relations, charged themselves with his education, and to them he owed the sentiments of piety which he afterwards displayed, and never departed from. As his property was small, he employed himself in traffic less with a view to acquire a fortune, than an honourable competency. The new merchant, in pouring out his soul before God, and soliciting the light of the Holy Ghost, at the commencement of his undertaking, thus spoke within himself: "I am a follower of Christ, and hence I cannot be ignorant that I should, before all, seek to lay up for myself a treasure in heaven. I have sufficient reason to think that my God calls me to this state, (otherwise I should not embrace it;) but my understanding being so limited, I cannot, without imprudence, multiply my engagements without new graces; my profession demands care and attention; but I must associate to them a care of my salvation. My first obligation is to serve God; my second to fulfil for His sake the duties of my profession. If I serve not God, I lose all, since I lose my soul, to save which life has been given me, and the wealth I gain in trade is but a figure of the celestial riches for which I should incessantly sigh. Shall I not act as a fool, if I ever suffer these sentiments to be effaced?"

These reflections of Cyprian were not superfi-

cial; they, on the contrary, became the seed of that christian life which merited for him eternal beatitude.

The young trader was not long without discovering that the two greatest dangers of his profession were avidity for gain, and such anxiety about business, as would efface from his mind and heart the remembrance of God and eternity. He neglected nothing to preserve himself from the perils which were going to surround him. Moderate in his desires, his personal interest was sacrificed as soon as it was found at variance with the law of God. He was inviolably attached to the rules of probity; candid, upright, honest, to such a degree, that the child could deal as safely with him as the man experienced in trade. The reputation he gained by this line of conduct attracted him universal confidence; those who once dealt with him were sure to purchase from him again, so that he soon became very extensive in business. He was by no means elated with his prosperity, he never forgot his former state of mediocrity, and often said that it was evident his prosperity was rather the gift of God than the fruit of his labours and experience: "Look at so many other merchants," he would say, "who, with more experience, more talent, more wealth than I, have failed in trade; to God then I owe my success, and therefore I only consider in my goods, the account I must one day give before God of their administration."

Our pious merchant never used indirect ways to attract customers, and in the entertainments which he gave them according to the laws of civility, he was careful never to depart from the rules of temperance, or the precepts of fasting and abstinence. His spirit of equity appeared no

less evidently towards his domestics, and the artisans whom he employed for his trade. He never delayed the payment of their hire or wages, nor required them to labour above their strength, nor to work on holidays or feasts, though he were to risk by it a considerable sum.

Cyprian was ever cautious to preserve the reputation of persons in his trade; if their failings or misfortunes were spoken of, he tried to excuse the former, and to attribute the latter to some other cause than their negligence. He never envied their good fortune, and always tried to live on amiable terms with them, so that the trite phrase, "Two of a trade never agree," could not be applied to him. He had a great horror of extortion and monopoly, and in dealing with stewards and superintendants, was most careful that the interests of their masters should not suffer—in fine, he was so delicate on the score of honesty, that he regarded as a great loss the least gain which had been acquired by illegitimate means.

But there was a second danger to be avoided, viz. forgetfulness of God, and indifference for the means of salvation, which generally distinguishes the man of business. To guard against it, Cyprian, already penetrated with the maxim, "What does it avail a person to gain the whole world if he lose his soul," regulated by and fulfilled in a spirit of religion the cares of his profession: in his greatest embarrassments he always found time for his spiritual duties. No person was more assiduous at the public ceremonies of the church, no man more devout at the Holy Mass, none more attentive to the divine word, nor more anxious to receive often the Holy Communion. He had stated hours each day for attending with his family to spiritual lecture. Sometimes he could not spare

for this exercise more than a few moments; but in this short space he learned more than others, after long reading, by the attention he paid, and the application which he made of the subject to his own conduct. The New Testament and the Imitation of Christ, together with the Christian Year, were his favourite works.

To holy meditation he joined fervent vocal prayer, at which he generally knelt, notwithstanding his many infirmities and great age. He carried with him the spirit of prayer and recollection into all places, in his walks, journeys, and even into his most distracting occupations. Sometimes he contemplated the divine greatness manifested in the construction of the universe, and in the variety of works which adorn it. Sometimes the divine bounty fertilizing the earth, and pouring its copious effusions into nature's lap, struck him with admiration; or again he was taken with the wisdom of God in the vicissitudes of seasons and events—in short, he found God in all places, and in all places he loved him so ardently, that few approached him without perceiving its blessed effects.

Cyprian regarded his prosperity as the least valuable of the benefits received from God; because he knew that nothing was truly estimable which was not to last for ever. "I am obliged, O Lord," he used to say, with a grateful heart, "to thank you for the success of my affairs, which indeed has surpassed my expectations; but my gratitude should be immense for the justice which has characterised them, and which I owe to your grace. Finish, complete your work, my good God, by not permitting me to employ my wealth, save for your glory and my sanctification; for, alas! such is the effect of riches, that if you pre-

serve us not, they become occasions of temptation and stimulants to sin.

To guard against the dangers of prosperity, he continued to preserve the same simplicity and plainness in his manner of living, the same respect towards his superiors, and affability towards his equals. His clothes were not more expensive, his house more richly furnished, nor his table more daintily provided than when he began business, and hence he was always enabled to assist the poor most liberally. He had no children; but his brothers and their children, besides many distant relations, formed a family for which he provided with paternal bounty. His friends, too, experienced the goodness of his heart; his sweetest delight was to prevent their requests, always painful and often humiliating to the self-love of him who is obliged to make them.

He regarded as great faults some light movements of impatience occasioned by the hurry of business: he endeavoured to suppress them, and thus acquired that meekness which characterises the true christian. "Ah!" said he once to a friend who besought him to forgive some offence or injury on his part, "Ah! my son, it is my province to ask your pardon, and pray you to compassionate the infirmities of old age. Beg of the Lord to forgive my faults and pity my weaknesses."

His purity of body and heart was so perfect, that he never incurred the least suspicion; he seemed, like holy Job, to have *made a compact with his eyes*, so careful was he to close them against every thing injurious to modesty.

To put the virtue of this good merchant to the test, God permitted that his long course of prosperity should be interrupted by a great reverse of

fortune. Cyprian lost a lawsuit, which involved the greater part of his property. He received the news of his defeat with perfect resignation. "My God," said he, prostrating himself on the earth, "you have only taken away your own gifts, may your holy name be blessed for ever." The next day he approached the holy table as tranquilly as if nothing had happened, and drew from this visit of his God and Saviour all the strength he needed for the support of this great cross.

But the Lord did not leave long in mediocrity a person so disinterested and so generous. A short time after, he found himself possessed of a sum so considerable, that he was enabled to continue his former liberalities; then he resigned his commerce to spend the rest of his days in preparing to meet his Judge.

He was not anxious, like many, to remove from his mind the thought of death. When great persons in his province died, he appeared not disconcerted nor alarmed. When his friends were summoned before God, he was afflicted, because he had a sensible and feeling heart; but his sorrow betrayed neither attachment to life, nor apprehension of death. The idea of dissolution by dint of frequent reflection, had lost all its bitterness; he was always disposed, always ready to die during the painful illnesses with which he was visited. His friends were only concerned about losing him; they needed not to employ, in his regard, those hints which are often necessary with others to acquaint them of their danger, for he often said to them, "Do not let me be surprised by death, I conjure you; that is the greatest piece of service you can render me."

His ardour for the enjoyment of celestial goods, his desire to possess his God had never been

cooled. The love of this divine Being, which commenced in his tender years, was never lessened either by the hurry of business, the seduction of riches, or the various accidents of life. The chill of old age, which cools the most lively passions, only served to inflame him with new ardours for God. It seemed that God wished to give in his person the example of an affluent man, humble, chaste, upright; a good friend, a good relation, a good citizen, richer in virtue than worldly goods.

Having some foresight of his last hour, the good old man prepared his last will, and recommended his friends to preserve among them peace, harmony, and fidelity to the Lord, and desire of heavenly treasures. He died at Breteuil in Normandy, November 17, 1717, after receiving the last sacraments with the greatest fervour, and joined his virtuous consort, the imitatrix of his virtues and good works, in a happy eternity.

Every state, morally speaking, has furnished saints for heaven, for "God wills all men to be saved," and furnishes them with the means of sanctification. May we henceforth employ them well, that, like Cyprian Morel, we may appear with *full hands* before the great tribunal. Amen.



JULIANA JOUVIN,

A SISTER OF CHARITY.

Translated from the French of Abbe Carron.

JULIANA JOUVIN was born at Ribout, a little village in the diocese of Mans, 12th September, 1677, of parents whom piety rendered truly great before God, while narrow circumstances made them contemptible in the eyes of the world. Deprived by death of her father while yet an infant, she remained under the tutelage of her mother, with nine brothers and sisters, all older than herself, until God, who seems to have formed on her particular designs, inspired a virtuous woman to provide for her education. She was now committed to the care of some pious ladies, with whom she had the happiness of knowing Father Joisneau, an intimate friend of the great St. Vincent of Paul. This worthy clergyman having learned by divine revelation, that Juliana would one day become a sister of the order of charity, then lately established by St. Vincent, earnestly applied himself to instruct her in all the truths of religion, and to sow in her young heart the seeds of christian virtues. His cares were not bestowed in vain; the little creature soon became a model of piety, not only for her young companions, but even for her mistresses. One of these having uttered during recreation, an indiscreet expression, Juliana was so pained, that her trouble appeared on her countenance. When interrogated as to the cause, she said, "Ah Ma'am,

I cannot bear to hear you speak so unbecomingly, God preserve me from the like." Though this was said in a very respectful tone, the lady felt somewhat hurt, and complained of Juliana to F. Joisneau; but the man of God so far from blaming her, said, "O this child far surpasses other children in sagacity and innocence. You should be very circumspect before her, and I hope you will not forget it."

Juliana's progress in virtue was so rapid, that it was soon seen her good confessor was guided by the Spirit of God. She was judged fit to make her first communion when only eleven years old, and after disposing herself for this great action with all possible fervour, determined to consecrate herself to God, solely and without reserve.

In pursuance of this resolution, she begged admission among the Sisters of Charity at Vilaine la Suée, but her youth placed an unsurmountable barrier to the accomplishment of her pious desires. However she cheerfully submitted to the delay, and expected in peace the moment of God. Inimical to frivolous amusements she totally avoided them, and in the asylum where Providence had placed her, endeavoured to form herself to the interior life, and devoted herself to the practice of charity, and mortification. Her ordinary relaxation, was to attend on the poor; thus she formed herself betimes for her future state. The most revolting diseases, services the most humiliating, cooled not the ardour of her zeal; there was no employment too disgusting for her charity.

Burning with desire to consecrate herself wholly to God, she no sooner attained her eighteenth year, than she renewed her application to the daughters of St. Vincent, and finally succeeded in procuring admission among these heroines of reli

gion. Her confessor who had never lost sight of her, said to the Superioress on that occasion, "This young girl, reverend Mother, is a gift God bestows on your community; she brings to you the precious treasure of her baptismal innocence, with dispositions the most favourable to its preservation." A glorious testimony indeed, and which those who through life knew Juliana, confirmed after her death.

The young servant of the poor now entirely devoted herself to the knowledge, love, and practice of the duties of her state. She so deeply imbibed the spirit of the institute, that it became as it were natural to her. Her tender piety which was at the same time solid and interior, soon conciliated the love and esteem of her sister religious, and gained her the confidence of her superiors.

Appointed to establish with two ancient sisters a house of her order at Royan, in the diocese of Saintes, and obliged to lodge for some time after arriving there in an extern house; a scene of combat was open to Juliana. Her personal graces, joined to the amiabilities of her character, occasioned her different attacks, but the grace of God rendered her victorious; these contests only served to manifest her contempt of the world, and fidelity to her vocation.

New trials awaited her; being removed to a house of the institute in Charente, she found the Superioress, though a very good woman, so prepossessed against her, that she had need of great patience to bear the treatment she received. She had recourse to God, and he became her strength and consolation, enabling her to suffer all with patience and humility, and in the end discovered her innocence and great worth. As modest in prosperity as she had been patient in

adversity, the only return she made those who caused her such harsh treatment, was to heap benefits on them, and to load them with demonstrations of kindness.

Scarcely had she tasted the sweets of peace, than she was sent to Tremblade, where for ten years she laboured with indefatigable zeal for the conversion of heretics. She was very successful, and produced abundant fruit among the youthful professors of Calvinism; but, just when preparing new measures for increasing the number of her proselytes, she received a command to repair to the great hospital of Rochfort, then under the direction of the Grey Sisters, to discharge the office of assistant.

This convent, where the duties were as difficult as they were numerous, enclosed in its bosom seeds of division from the diversity of sentiment and inflexibility of certain characters; but Juliana managed all so prudently and charitably, that former contests were forgotten, and good order and tranquillity restored. Mistress of the hearts of her sisters in Christ, she applied herself to advance them more in perfection, to render them extremely sensible to the miseries of the poor, and most careful to avoid the shadow of a fault. The consequence was, that the Community although very numerous, and engaged in most dissipating occupations, was soon renewed in fervour and regular observance.

Nothing escaped her vigilance, zeal, and charity. A true servant of the poor, she rendered them all the good offices their miseries required: although naturally delicate and subject to frequent indisposition, yet when the members of Christ were to be served, she gathered strength for that purpose, even from her weaknesses. One of her most

anxious cares was to form the young sisters to the institute, to instruct them by word, to edify them by example. Every thing she undertook succeeded: God endowed her with great lights and wonderful discernment, and these she communicated to others, for the benefit of the poor. Her whole time was divided between prayer and works of charity. But to become more conformable to the divine *model of the predestined*, she was again fastened to the cross in the same manner as at Royan, her external charms having attracted many. Even women ran to see her, and pointed her out to their children with admiration; but, faithful to her divine spouse, she happily discovered, and wisely disconcerted, the schemes adopted by the arch enemy for her spiritual ruin.

Here learn, young virgins, the means Juliana adopted to preserve herself, and which may be often necessary for you. Contempt of all that the world admired in her, negligence in dress, an holy industry to appear deformed when obliged to appear abroad, mortification of the senses, renunciation of the most innocent satisfactions, flight of the world, maintaining no intercourse with it but from necessity, no conversation except on edifying subjects, constant vigilance over herself, to avoid within and without whatever might retard her progress in that great perfection to which she aspired; continual union with God, fervent prayers for the divine assistance, presented with the more humility as she more deeply felt her innate weakness and insufficiency.

Juliana's heroic virtue could not remain long concealed from her superiors; the more they knew her, the more they loved and esteemed her. Since her death, a person as distinguished for piety as for birth, declared that she never convers-

ed with her without feeling more animated to serve God ; her presence alone inspired a love of virtue.

Being charged with the government of the asylum for orphans, and appointed visitor of the province, her humility took the alarm. She was terrified at these dignities, and with a strong feeling of her incapacity for performing the duties annexed to them, went to consult her confessor. After having listened to her patiently, his only reply was, "Obey, my sister, it is God who speaks by your superiors. Business makes men, and then men make business." At these few words all her fears subsided, all her repugnance vanished, she instantly accepted the offices aforesaid.

A good mother to her children in Jesus, she watched vigilantly over them, provided for their wants, studied their weaknesses, discovered to them their passions, taught them how to subdue them, and inspired them with a due esteem for their vocation and a love of solitude and retreat. She managed every thing with such prudence and charity, that all were satisfied. She cherished the poor most tenderly, and even prevented their desires, so far did she carry her charitable cares. She was most exact in dispensing the alms committed to her, and never embarrassed her conscience on that article ; in fine, she was so occupied about the poor, that she forgot her personal necessities.

The care she took of the houses committed to her, confirmed more and more the opinion that had been conceived of her merit. Nothing escaped her penetration ; exact visits, well-timed advices, vigilance in observing the wants of all, readiness in providing for them, zeal for the spirit of the institute, care of regular observance, wis-

dom in her counsels, firmness in her projects—behold an assemblage of qualifications which caused her, at the age of thirty-eight years, to be chosen assistant to her community.

While in this office, it was evidently seen how eminently Juliana possessed the spirit of counsel, and the gift of discerning spirits. Her discretion was as admirable as her zeal was ardent in maintaining the interests of God. When obliged to reprehend, charity sweetened her expressions, she never gave a reprimand without first acknowledging before God that she herself was more deserving of reproach than those whom she had to correct. "Unhappy creature," said she, "I reprove my sisters for external faults, while I myself am full of interior ones, much more displeasing to God and offensive in his sight." She felt great satisfaction in directing the young sisters; she had a particular attraction for that office. The lessons she most strenuously inculcated were purity of intention and constant recollection, so that the functions of Martha would not hinder the contemplation of Mary. Her example supported her words. To speak of God to these youthful spouses of His Son, to entertain them with His goodness, His mercy, and the obligations of their state, were her sweetest occupation after that of holy prayer; in which sacred duty she was so fervent, that seeing her come from it was sufficient to inspire others with a love for its exercise.

She maintained a constant union with God by means of recollection and silence; even at recreation she would not permit her young sisters to entertain themselves but with useful and edifying subjects, and this with all possible modesty, and in a low voice, in order to avoid dissipation, and to be attentive to the Holy Spirit, who inces-

santly watches at the door of our hearts. Remember, she used to say, you must render to God *an account of every idle word* you say; it hurts no one, I grant, but it is useless, and that suffices for its retrenchment. Jesus, our divine Master, has told us so; if it costs us now a little violence, we shall at death be amply indemnified.

When the time of her superiority had expired, Juliana joyfully descended to the rank of a simple religious. "None but God," said she, "knows what a superioress has to undergo. My little virtue caused me to feel it in all its bitterness. It is true our ecclesiastical Superiors are extremely charitable, but happy are they who do not know it at such great expense!"

Being called to Versailles by the pious Queen Mary Lecksinska, wife of Louis XV., who honoured her with her confidence, she considered herself as at the termination of her exile, and under this impression redoubled her assiduity in the performance of her duties. The attractive she had always experienced for solitude, rendered this little suspension of active duty most pleasing and agreeable. "I taste more and more the sweets of my retreat," said she, "though I cannot enjoy it quite so much as I could wish, being obliged to hold intercourse with the patrons of my dear poor. How painful is not this to me, who deserve rather to be under the earth than on it!"

Unencumbered by the heavy charges which had hitherto embarrassed her, Juliana applied more zealously than ever to the government of her new community at Versailles; after God, it held the first place in her heart. Although in high estimation with the Queen, as well as the ladies of the court, she never made her appearance there but when the necessities of the poor,

or an absolute command from her majesty obliged her. Even then she lost not sight of God; at the sight of the splendour and magnificence of the court, she and her young religious adored the King of Heaven, who alone is essential greatness; the rich apparel of the nobility inspired her with disgust for all things transitory, while the tattered rags of the poor filled her with satisfaction, being, as she would say, fitter to teach us what we are. In the midst of the court, *then* the most brilliant in Europe, she spoke of God with a noble freedom, and in a manner so moving and eloquent, that she inspired all with admiration.

Instructed by the Holy Ghost, she used often repeat, "All passes, my God, all passes with time; You alone are immutable, You alone are eternal, Your love is the only good, whose possession is lasting and permanent. When, O Lord, shall I behold you face to face? I die with ardour to see and love you without intermission." Such were her desires; but to conceive their vivacity we should be penetrated with her love and fervour. Let us more minutely study her conduct, it will show us the great veneration in which we should hold her.

The strong and lively ideas which were rivetted in her mind of the Sovereignty of God, continually animated her to honour Him by heroic practices of obedience and other virtues. "I shall be attentive, she would say, to all my movements, lest I offend that divine eye which sees *all*; that paternal heart which loves *all*; that omnipotent arm which supports *all*; in this amiable Lord, and in Him alone, shall I seek my wisdom, my consolation, my love, my strength, my God, my Father, my Spouse, my *all*. Struck with admiration at her dispositions, one of her confessors said to her,

“Continue, my daughter, to walk under the eyes of God, to be all to our Lord, to live as if you and He were the only beings in existence, desiring to be forgotten by all. But though every thing earthly fills you with disgust, moderate your desire of death, support life with peace and resignation.”

Juliana had a wonderful devotion to all the mysteries of the Sacred Humanity of Jesus Christ, and applied herself to discover in the different actions of his mortal life, the spirit which animated Him, forming thereon the plan of her interior conduct. “Let us imitate,” said she, “the profound humiliations of the Word Incarnate in his hidden, penitent, and laborious life: let us not lose one of its circumstances; all that which has been written, was written for our instruction. She had chosen ejaculations suitable to the different festivals, she taught them to her spiritual children, and reminded them to repeat them as the feasts occurred, to animate their devotion. With an amiable simplicity she would say, “How many times to-day, my daughter, have you thought on the mystery the Church celebrates? Do now say with me, *Deo gratias, the Word was made flesh and dwells amongst us*, or, *Glory be to God on high, and peace on earth to men of good will*, or, *Come, divine Spirit, into our hearts, and enkindle in our hearts the purest flames of Thy love.*” Thus, according to the feast. She was very devout to the Passion and wounds of Christ. “Let us seek,” said she, “in the adorable wounds of our Spouse, the remedy of our evils; let us abide within them, we shall there be invincible to our enemies. Let us be firmly fixed to the feet of our crucified Jesus, and never depart from his

cross, one sole drop of his precious blood is sufficient to sanctify and save us.

She was consumed with love for the adorable sacrament, the treasure of all pious souls, and found nothing so sweet and delightful as its reception in the Holy Communion. She incessantly sighed after this happiness, and found in no place such consolation as that experienced before the tabernacle where her beloved reposed under the mystic veil. There it was she deposited all her pains and inquietudes, there she sought her strength and consolation, and there she edified all by her recollection, her fervour, her ardent sighs and tears.

Her lively faith penetrated her with respect for the temples of the living God. "Let us remember," said she, "that our churches are holy and terrible. Since God resides within them in all his greatness and majesty, let us not behave so thoughtlessly as to give him reason to say we *know him not.*"

She was particularly devout to the holy angels, of whom, alas! the greater number, even of pious persons, are almost totally unmindful. Her angel guardian received from her special marks of love and devotion. "Our God, out of his ineffable goodness, has given us," she would say, "a prince of his court to guard and defend us: let us shun all that might displease so holy and beneficent a guide, let us try to merit a continuance of his cares, by the imitation of his virtues, his punctuality in obeying the commands of God, his indifference for employs, his constant attention to the divine majesty. He cares not whether he be appointed to guard a prince or a peasant, a learned or an illiterate person, a saint or a sinner, regarding nothing but the accomplishment of the will of

God. Let us not forget whenever we meet a person in the street, or elsewhere, to salute his angel who ever accompanies him."

But how can we describe this holy soul's devotion to the ever blessed and glorious Virgin Mary? She was ingenious in devising a thousand different ways of testifying towards *her* the most tender love. She incessantly meditated on the virtues of this amiable Queen, her humility, sweetness, purity, love of the hidden life, and union with God, in order to imitate them, and she tried to induce others also to be devout to her.

Modesty was of all others her favourite virtue. "Holy modesty," said she, "belongs to all times and places; it should regulate our gestures, our whole deportment, even the tone of our voice. It is a moving, though a silent sermon; simple exterior modesty has operated the conversion of many. Let our words be modest, avoiding such as are vain and useless; let our eyes be under the government of this amiable virtue, lest they fix themselves on any dangerous object. If modesty is recommended to all Christians, with how much more reason to religious who are the spouses of the Lamb? It is this divine spouse that inspired our blessed Father St. Vincent of Paul to give us this virtue as a veil to screen us from the world. Let us never lay aside this charming ornament, as *we are made spectacles to the world, to angels, and to men*, by the obligations of our institute; thus, wherever we are sent, we shall attain its glorious end."

Juliana had a great devotion to her holy father, the illustrious St. Vincent, it gave her real pleasure to speak of him. "We are the children of saints," said she, "let us not degenerate from our origin, or disgrace our high birth let us never

forget the doctrine and example of our holy founder, thus we shall be recognized for his true children.

A true daughter of the Church, she earnestly sought and desired to see it provided with zealous and indefatigable labourers, and often recommended prayers and communions to obtain from God ministers according to his heart. "These," said she, "would be gifts from the hands of God, and evident marks of his protection; whereas bad priests are the greatest scourges he can send us, they are signs of his indignation." At the time of ordinations, she used to say, "Among the young levites now about to receive the holy order of priesthood, perhaps there are some who are destined one day to be our guides; let us pray fervently that they may receive abundantly the sacerdotal spirit, and thus be enabled to lead us in the true paths of sanctity and perfection."

The confidence of this virtuous soul was firm and unmoveable. "God is our Father," she would say, "He is more interested for us than we ourselves are, let us leave to Him the care of our affairs. If He sometimes refuses what we ask, it is to give us what will be more conducive to our true happiness." When the community were threatened with a considerable loss, "Be it so," said Juliana, "if God wills it; his goodness should excite our confidence, the number of the sick increases, our resources diminish; but our heavenly Father will provide for us. Let us *think of Him* with St. Catherine of Sienna, and *He will think of us*; let us only be occupied with promoting his honour, in serving His poor members, and He will take care of our wants. Besides, each day suffices for its own inquietudes, why then be troubled about the future? *If God is for us*

who shall be against us? Ah! let us hope in this Lord, and we shall never be confounded."

Accustomed from her infancy to walk under the eyes of God, Juliana acquired the habit of directing to him continually her thoughts, words, and her every movement. If the soul be more present in what she loves than in where she is, it can be truly said that hers was more in God than in herself. This divine object incessantly occupied her. "The recollection of the divine Majesty," she used to say, "should be as frequent as respiration. *Let our conversation be in heaven*, let us soar to that blessed abode with all the desires of our hearts, for there alone can we find true happiness, and real felicity. Creatures are poor, they are nothing of themselves, let us go to the source."—"I sincerely desire to see you at my ease in our true country," replied she, to a person who was very fond of her, "the satisfactions of this foreign land are unworthy of us; let us lament our exile, and prepare to depart therefrom by the gate of divine love. O may we be wholly consumed in its amiable flames!"

A soul so inflamed with love, must naturally have felt great delight in conversing with her Beloved: indeed, nothing gave her so much pleasure as the contemplation of His perfections. From the great lights she received in this sacred exercise, she used to say, "There is nothing more perfect in the spiritual life than to do what God wills, than to submit to His good pleasure; we have only been created for this end." If she learned any unpleasant news, "Blessed be God," said she, "we should every day die to something if we wish to attain the pure love of God. Our food, in time, is to do the will of our heavenly

Father. O may it be accomplished in us during eternity!"

It would be offering Juliana's memory a great injury to suspect her of presumption; deeply penetrated with a fear of the divine judgments, this humble soul often repeated, "Ah! when we shall appear at the tribunal of the Most High, there is no good which we would not wish to have done, no evil which we would not desire to have avoided; then the least infidelities will throw us into fear and consternation. Let us try to come with confidence to meet our Judge, bearing the rules and constitutions of our holy institute; then, if faithful, we shall obtain the reward of our little struggles, our petty violences."

Not satisfied with exhorting her sisters, Juliana embraced every opportunity of inviting others to virtue: thus a lady of quality much addicted to playing at chess, and who could not be reclaimed by the immense losses she sustained, nor by all the representations of her confessor, the celebrated Father Gourdan, was converted by the prayers and exhortations of our servant of God; she could not hold out against the sweetness, prudence, and simplicity of Juliana's reasoning. These little missions afforded her great delight, "It is a great comfort," she would say, "to be obliged to teach others to love God. Let us *give and it shall be given to us*; let us reckon ourselves highly honoured in being made instruments in the hands of God for the salvation of souls redeemed by his precious blood." A person cannot truly love God without loving his neighbour; hence the charity of Juliana was exceeding great; she excused and made allowances for every defect. "Let us not despise our brethren because of their weaknesses," said she; "let us consider their foibles as a little dust

which, scattered over glittering gems, would only obscure their lustre. God is not displeased with our neighbour for his involuntary faults; this good Father *knows our frame, he remembers we are dust*; let us have the same merciful sentiments one towards another, ever remembering that in the weakness of man the power of God is made manifest."

Suspected of partiality for some of her sisters, she said, "You will one day see what it cost me to testify my love for that person. You will know before God, that those I am most inclined to love, are precisely the persons to whom I give fewer marks of affection; I have for all the sentiments which I owe them." She often said to herself, as we see in her resolutions, "I stand in need of an abundant charity, a sincere cordiality, and an unalterable sweetness every day of my life. First, then, I shall esteem my sisters, considering them, with the eye of faith, as daughters of the eternal Father, spouses of His divine Son, and sanctuaries of the Holy Ghost. Secondly, I shall love them ardently, as being so closely allied to our Lord. Thirdly, I shall honour them as queens, since they are the spouses of the King of kings. Fourthly, I shall never speak to them passionately, nor with the impetuosity of a blind, misguided zeal, and be careful to avoid every offensive and unkind expression; our Lord considers as said or done to himself, that which I say or do to my sisters."

Juliana had of herself the most contemptible opinion, she considered herself the vilest creature on earth; her extreme regret for the least faults was expressed in the most humiliating form. Her confessors often obliged her to make use of terms less strong in accusing herself, lest she might make herself appear more culpable than

she really was. If the Queen gave her tokens of esteem and confidence, she said with holy simplicity, "Madame, I am very unworthy of your Majesty's notice, being only a poor little villager, but what heightens my indignity, is the number of my sins and infidelities." Like her blessed father Vincent, who delighted in publishing the meanness of his origin, Juliana declared her low extraction to all who testified towards her the least esteem. Her most earnest desire was to be despised and contemned: "Forgotten by all," she said, "a person is sheltered from the arrows of vanity." She concealed her good works so cautiously, that God alone knows their number, and was most anxious not to lose any opportunity of participating in the humiliations of Jesus Christ.

Crosses and afflictions she considered great favours, and never did she cease testifying to God her lively gratitude for the portion he sent her of them. "The cross," said she to her sisters, "is the wood which nourishes the flame of divine love. Yes, the cross should be our portion and inheritance, and Jesus crucified our strength and consolation."

In the midst of the community she apportioned herself the basest and most humiliating occupations, and she used as much as possible to anticipate the time of performing them, lest any other might deprive her of the merit. If through inadvertence she gave any sister an occasion of displeasure, she threw herself at her feet, and said with the greatest humility, "See what I am capable of; do now, dear sister, forget the uneasiness I have caused you."

Every one admired her patience and resignation in the different infirmities wherewith she was tried, but ever profoundly humble, she discovered

imperfections in her best works. "I suffer much," she would say, "this distemper does not let me rest a moment; I bear it very badly, I confess, for when it is very violent, I beg to be delivered, from it, or at least that it may be alleviated, in order that I may be able still to serve the poor. This, however, is done with some apprehension, knowing the many sins I have to expiate. Corrupted by self-love, I am tempted to indulge humour when I suffer more than ordinary; you see now how little of solid virtue I possess, this should move you to pray for me!"

Towards the end of her life, being obliged to adopt certain mitigations, and to treat herself less rigorously, she said, How painful to be obliged to treat so delicately a body of sin, how humiliating to an abject creature who has been offending God more than sixty years, to be compelled to use such comforts and refreshments.

Continually occupied in mortifying her body, in watching over the thoughts of her mind and the affections of her heart, that all might be regulated by the views of faith and the principles of an unmixed charity, Juliana habitually refused herself, (and it seemed not to cost her a struggle,) all that could recreate her sight and satisfy her taste, and used to renounce interiorly the involuntary satisfaction, found by the senses in things necessary for the sustenance of life. As she became by this custom quite indifferent to, and forgetful of her wants, it was necessary for others to be mindful of them, for fear of bad consequences. She suffered without mitigation the inclemency of the seasons; it is supposed that the severe winter of 1743, during which she never approached the fire, occasioned the illness of which she died. God no doubt overlooked this excessive harshness towards

herself, because of the purity of her motives. She thus expressed herself to a friend on that occasion, "How painful has this winter been to me, but I suffer more now that Lent approaches, they will not allow me to fast, and I ought to spend the whole time on bread and water."

To finish Juliana's portrait, we shall give the regulations she prescribed herself, and which she observed with as much fervour as fidelity. Her devotion inspired her with the plan, but she did not begin to observe it until approved by her confessors, who judged it very conformable to her interior dispositions. It is herself who speaks.

1. "In the morning when I awake, I shall make an act of divine love, saying, O my God! I love you with all my heart; may I love you more and more, O Lord, who art the soul of my soul—what have I in heaven or on earth beside Thee? Thou art the God of my heart and my portion for ever. I shall vary these acts, I shall produce them without speaking by a sigh or an elevation of heart to God."

2. "At meditation, after the ordinary affections, I shall dwell very long on acts of love; I shall say with St. Augustine, Pierce my heart, O Lord, with the inflamed arrows of Thy charity. Thou hast made us, O Lord, for Thyself, and our hearts cannot rest till they repose in Thee. O beauty, ever ancient and always new! too late have I known Thee, happy am I, if even now I love thee. I shall entertain myself with these pious sentiments whole hours together, in order to maintain the spirit of prayer."

3. "At holy Mass, I shall say with St. Catherine of Sienna, 'O Love! you are not known; O Love! you are not loved. Divine fire which from all eternity consumed this Lamb without spot, the

divine Spouse of my heart and my soul, you are now about to immolate Him mystically on this altar, to fortify me in the life of grace, to inflame me with your pure flames, O divine fire! ever burning and never consumed, inflame my heart, purify my soul, destroy within me all that is not perfectly subject to Thy laws."

4. "At work I shall elevate my heart to God in these, or similar terms. The Lord has lighted up in my heart the flames of His love, He Himself has become my instructor. Divine Spouse of my soul! may your love inflame all hearts, may it totally consume mine, and penetrate even to the marrow of my bones! It is for you I am going to perform this action, to make this correction, to pay this visit. Inebriated with the love of my God, I wish only Him, I seek only Him: He alone, holds to me the place of all things, I have nothing more at heart than to establish his reign in the souls confided to me. Draw me to yourself, O Lord."

5. "At meals, I shall penetrate myself with these sentiments. Bread of angels, celestial food, true nourishment of my soul, how long shall I be obliged to use these contemptible meats to support this wretched life? When, O Lord, shall it be, that separated from this body I shall feed with the blessed on thy increated vision? I eat, O Lord, because you will it; I drink to enable me to labour for you; I unite this repast with those which my Saviour took on earth; it is for your glory and in your grace and love I wish to take it."

6. "At recreation, while conversing with my sisters, I shall raise my heart and mind to the Incarnate Word, and say to him, O Word! wisdom of the Father! enlighten my mind, influence my heart, direct my tongue, that I may say

nothing but what is holy, prudent, and edifying. *You alone, O Lord, have the words of eternal life.*"

7. "In sleep even, I shall nourish the fire of Divine love, saying with the Spouse, *I sleep, but my heart watches.* In this manner I shall try to sanctify my life by the exercise of divine love, loving my God with all my heart, and soul, and mind, and strength, as a child loves her parent, and a spouse her bridegroom, May I love you thus, O Lord."

One might imagine that a life so united with God, would flow on in profound peace; but the purest souls have their inquietudes, they are often engendered in their love itself, and their fears of not loving; behold the rules which Juliana prescribed herself to preserve the peace of her soul. "For the past, I shall entertain sentiments of a sincere, mild, and peaceful compunction; for the present, sentiments of a tender charity and true cordiality for my sisters and the poor members of Jesus Christ. My first, my continual occupation, will be the holy presence of God, union with Christ our Lord, the interior life of grace and faith, that all my actions may be worthy of God and his eternal recompenses. For the future, I shall entertain a firm confidence in the eternal Father and his Son Jesus Christ: considering myself as already saved by hope, I shall perform all my actions in that holy confidence which does not exclude filial fear. Fidelity to these resolutions would sanctify any life, however long I shall try to be faithful to them in life and death."

Juliana had long sighed for the moment which would indissolubly unite her to her spouse; from afar she saluted the promised land, and counted the moments of her exile. "I am tired of the world," wrote she to one of her sisters, "I long,

earnestly long to enter on the inheritance of my heavenly Father; I have heard our dear sister N—— knocks at the door, may I enter with her, or at least follow her soon. I much envy her lot: only think, that for a moment of pain, sweetened by a thousand consolations, we shall receive an eternity of joys, what can we more ardently desire than the completion of our banishment. But let us be consoled, we have not a hundred years to spend on earth after our friends, and they do not forget us before God, charity forbids it."

With the same spirit of disengagement she returned the compliments made her on recovering from one of her illnesses. I received with gratitude the testimonies of your kindness and affection, my malady greatly consoled me, because it reminded me that this house of clay encloses within it the principle of its destruction. These little illnesses are faint essays of that final one which I think would be already sent if I were a good religious; God be praised, who still gives me time to become so."

But if she loved the thoughts of dissolution, she was not without apprehensions of the judgement which was to follow. Her fear thereof caused her to say to a friend, "Beg of God, I beseech you, to grant me the grace to die well; the hour comes and I tremble because of the divine judgments, for I have greatly abused the grace of God."

The remembrance of the divine mercies soon dissipated her terrors. "O, she would say, what vast resources are contained in the mercies of my amiable Saviour! may we sing them eternally."

An illness of seventeen days so weakened her constitution, that the rest of her life was but a species of langour; let us again hear her speak

of her state, her sentiments are truly edifying. The divine goodness draws from its treasures a few slight, and sometimes violent attacks of illness, and presents them to me; one shall come at last that will complete the work. My God does not forget me, he every day makes me a present of some new pain, light indeed, when compared with my sins. Ask for me such a great share of divine love as may totally destroy all inordinate love of self. My strength fails, this poor body decays, help me to thank God. I hope he will continue to purify me by infirmity; they compliment me on my good complexion, but I feel I shall soon be the colour of clay; O may it be when it shall please our good Master. Beg of Him, that by the good use of the present time, I may repair the past."

In the month of February 1744, being attacked with a violent pain in the side, she was obliged to lie down; her disease soon appeared mortal, so that she judged there was no time to be lost, and at once disposed herself for the last sacraments. She received them with the greatest piety and devotion, and thenceforward abandoned herself to the Divine pleasure, content to live or die. In the most violent agonies not a murmur escaped her, she continued to immolate herself on the altar of the Divine Will, her only desire being to see His blessed will perfectly accomplished. Neither the kindness of the Queen towards her, nor the attention of the ladies of the court, diminished the humility of the pious invalid. "Do you observe," said an important person who happened to be near her when these ladies visited her, "the kindness these great people manifest towards you?" "Yes," replied she, "and I value it much, but I feel how little I merit it; I confess

that one motive for desiring death, is the esteem people testify for me—God grant it be not a chastisement—such is the light in which I am inclined to view it.”

As her end approached, the serenity of her countenance indicated the peace of her soul. Having the use of all her faculties to the last moment, she availed herself of it to multiply her acts of conformity to the will of God. When she lost the power of utterance, she by signs begged a general absolution; though *dying*, she made an effort to dispose herself for it, and when the priest pronounced the last words, she joined her hands and peaceably slept in the Lord, February 13th, 1744, in the 67th year of her age, and the 49th since her entrance into religion. Rev. F. Conty, then Superior General of the Order, said in the first transports of grief for her death, (and he knew her better than many,) “What a pure and innocent soul was not Juliana! Ah, how I would wish to be like her!”

Her funeral obsequies were simple, but honoured by an immense concourse of poor. The Queen was greatly affected when she learned Juliana was no more; she caused her portrait to be drawn, and distributed immense alms to procure the speedy repose of her soul.

O happy Juliana! prudent Virgin, may we like you prepare to meet the Spouse with the oil of charity and the lamp of good works.

JOSEPH AROT,

OR, THE VIRTUOUS LAWYER.

Translated from the French of Abbe Carron.

JOSEPH AROT, son of John Arot and Anne Charon, was born 24th of March, 1680, and baptized the 26th, in the church of St. Lawrence at Nantes. The interval between his birth and his baptism, caused this child of benediction to say in after life, that he had lived two days under the care of the Mother of God, the 25th of March being the glorious feast of the Annunciation. He was very devout to St. Joseph, whose name he bore, as also to St. Anne, the parent of his virginal protectress.

Joseph was placed, in proper time, under the care of a near relative distinguished for her piety, who directed towards God the first movements of his infant heart; when death deprived him of her guardianship, God supplied it in the person of a holy priest; under his directions, and by his example, he made a rapid progress in the ways of God, and it was his greatest delight to perform pious exercises, relieve the poor, &c. He applied to study with great success, and his course of philosophy being terminated, he applied himself to the study of the law, and even acquired some knowledge of medicine. Although Joseph occupied himself with solid objects he did not neglect the agreeable arts, and at an age

when others waste their precious time in trifles and frivolities, he was most careful not to mispend a moment. The choice of a state of life now engrossed his ideas; he had for a long time been disposed, as all virtuous young persons should be, to embrace that profession to which it would please God to call him. Having made a spiritual retreat with great edification, and renewed this exercise the following year, he felt a strong inclination to become a Carthusian monk, but his confessor not judging him called to that state, he took his degrees in the University, came to Rennes, and appeared at the bar in 1703.

Although born with more talent than taste for his profession, he acquired a brilliant reputation therein, and affairs the most important were confided to him. He soon became a celebrated lawyer, but instead of being vainly elated with his success, he attributed all to God, and every day felt new gratitude towards his Divine Benefactor.

With the approbation of his friends, he espoused Miss Lipeure 25th June 1707; the divine Spirit no doubt directed the choice of this excellent young man, for this lady possessed every good quality, and the connection became for both families a source of benedictions.

The virtuous counsellor received from the public every day, new testimonies of esteem and confidence; they respected his virtues, they admired his talents; he was consulted from all quarters, and all his advices were stamped with the seal of true wisdom and a knowledge of his profession. Men holding the first offices in the state, delighted in conferring with Joseph, in asking his opinion, and in strictly adhering to his advice. His imagination never seconded him more effica-

ciously, than when he advocated a cause involving the glory of God, or the miseries of his neighbour; indeed, this was the term of all his efforts and desires.

The charity of this good man was always increasing; no enterprise favourable to religion, or useful to humanity, was strange to him. After the alarming conflagration, which in 1720 desolated Rennes, when he saw his own houses consumed, without a murmur he employed all the money he could spare in rebuilding the church of St. Saviour, which had been the prey of the devouring element. Deeply affected at the miseries of his fellow-citizens whose houses had been destroyed, he caused temporary lodgings to be erected for them, which in their necessitous state were regarded as most commodious: he visited the hospitals, regulated their administration, and served the sick whom they lodged; it would be impossible to describe the fatigues and labours he underwent in the service of the poor of Jesus Christ.

But if the corporal necessities of his brethren excited his sympathy, he was still more deeply affected at the miseries of the soul; hence, he visited the prisons, procured for its wretched inmates the establishment of a new chapel, and all the consolations and helps religion affords.

In the year 1724, Joseph retired from the bar to occupy himself in the labour of the cabinet, both in order to have more leisure for good works, and to interdict his self-love the praises which his eloquence obtained for him. But no employment diminished his ardour in labouring for that sublime perfection to which he had been called as a follower of Christ. He continued to make his retreats annually; then alone with God, he

deplored his lightest failings with sincere sorrow, and drew up in writing a plan for his future conduct, which we could not read without envying the heart that formed it. So faithful a correspondence with grace merited for him most intimate communications with his divine Master; he tasted in his service inexpressible delights, such as those alone experience who give themselves unreservedly to God. Our virtuous Joseph was no less admirable for his charity and beneficence, than for his probity and disinterestedness. After some considerable losses, one of his brothers died, leaving his estates so encumbered, that the next inheritors resigned their right to possession, as it would entail on them an obligation to satisfy the creditors. By this act the latter were in danger of losing all, but Joseph took the property in hand, and after a considerable personal sacrifice, payed them even the last farthing.

He had three sons and two daughters. Two of the former devoted themselves to the Church, the third embraced his father's profession; his eldest daughter he honourably married, the second devoted herself in holy celibacy to the practice of good works, not having sufficient health for the religious state. For a long time the virtuous counsellor wished to withdraw from public life, to occupy himself in preparing for his end, which, according to the course of nature must soon approach: this he effected as soon as his son was able to fill his post and labour for the welfare of his country.

To say a word of the virtues of this good man, to the perfection of which he now wholly devoted himself; divested of every terrestrial affection, God alone was his treasure, salvation his grand affair; his faith animated all he did and said. God is

not known by the worldling, he used often to repeat, How blind men are ! let us pray and sigh, for charity waxes cold, and *true* faith is rare on earth. He was seldom observed to sit in the church ; he remained standing during the sermon, and knelt the rest of the time. He used to spend three hours in the morning before the altar after communion, which he every day received, had a great devotion to the Blessed Virgin, whom he styled his good Mother, to St. Joseph and the angels. It amazed him to see how little devotion persons had to the saints whose names they received in baptism, as also the foolish folly or vanity of parents in giving their children great family names instead of those of saints ; he had great veneration for, and confidence in, the patrons of the parishes and dioceses also, and said they ought to be invoked in all public, and private, and local calamities.

Occupied night and day in the work of God, he was not disheartened by difficulties ; on the contrary, they only served to rouse him to more vigorous exertions. How many abuses has he not thus corrected ! how many useful practices has he not introduced ! He communicated to persons in remote provinces his lights for their improvement, and received theirs ; the great reputation he had so justly acquired, gave such weight to his words, that his opinion decided affairs the most important. The sinner was subjugated by his eloquence, and gained over by his zeal ; he often effected the conversion of unfortunate females by the ascendant which divine grace assuredly gave him over others.

Though he omitted no occasion of doing good, he never cast a jealous eye on that which others

effected. What does it matter, he used to say, who does the good work, provided it be done?

His sweetness and patience were admirable. Whatever subject of displeasure he received, he never complained of any person; he received the most uncivil treatment and offensive language with as much satisfaction as worldlings receive testimonies of esteem. When a person was irritated against him, he mildly said with his eyes cast down, "Why are you vexed? I only desire to see you happy, and my language proceeds from my friendship for you; but permit me to say, bad temper hurts our sanctification greatly, and we are still like invalids who are unwilling that proper means be adopted for their cure." He patiently bore with those whose manners and dispositions differed from his; he treated sinners with great mildness and amiability; there was no bitterness in his zeal, because it was according to God. "Let us pray for them," he used to say, "they may yet become great saints." He received all most obligingly, whether they came for advice or pecuniary aid; he was always ready to minister to their wants, that it would seem they rendered him a service in applying for his assistance. He heard and replied to all with great condescension. Was it an unsuccessful person, he exhorted him to sanctify his afflictions, and to confide in Him who only seeks in all the sanctification of his elect.

His meekness never degenerated into weakness. He knew how to adopt vigorous measures when necessary; no one could be a greater enemy of that passiveness which often, under pretence of preserving peace, allows the continuance of abuses.

He always proposed his advice with perfect

moderation and great condescension for those who spoke before him; he was never moved when contradicted, and sacrificed his opinion without pain when a prospect of greater good presented itself. To reproach him for some defect, was to entitle one's self to his gratitude. "We are not full of imperfections," he would say, "but because we have no person to reproach us with them."

As he saw God in all, the commonest objects became to him a subject of meditation. If he listened to politics, he took occasion to admire the wisdom and providence of God in the conduct of events, and in the chain of second causes. Recollected in all places, all his moments were full. If obliged to wait for a person, he read some pages in the New Testament, or Imitation of Christ, which he always carried about him. Indifferent to all unconnected with eternity, he received every thing painful or otherwise, with that calm which is the fruit of a mortified life. Prayer was his element, and without being bound by the vow of poverty, he participated in the merits attached to it; for he left the disposal of his revenues to his virtuous spouse, only reserving for himself a little money, which he distributed to the poor. He was known throughout the province by the name of *Advocate of the poor*; he at all times pleaded the cause of the widow and the orphan, with as much zeal as talent; and his ordinary visits were to the prisons or the cottages of the poor. He was greatly pained to see persons unquiet about the success of some affair. "The God of the christians," he used to say, "abides not in trouble, he is a God of peace; why are you disquieted? nothing happens but by his permission. Your agitation after all cannot remedy matters; on the contrary, it deprives

you of that calm, necessary to take a judicious part."

His dearest occupation was to stifle dissensions and make up differences. "Commence," said he, to a person who complained of another, "commence to love this enemy, and your trouble will be lessened. From whence arise our troubles? often from our prejudices, and want of charity. Let us love each other, and all will go on well; there will be an end to lawsuits, murmuring and complaints, the universe will be one great city of peace."

It was a subject of great regret to our good Joseph, to see persons loaded with infirmities of mind and body, still occupying public places; he often advised them to adopt his course, that of consecrating their last years to prepare for death. He every year read over his last will, which, like every prudent and religious Christian, he had drawn up in time. In the same view he left Rennes, and retired to Vitre, his former residence; he was obliged to tear himself from the arms of the poor, so great was their grief to see him leave them.

At Vitre he composed two little works: one to subvert the fatal abuses which result from the venality of judicial offices, and another, called the Charitable Arbiter, the object of which was to engage men of talents to conciliate opposite parties, and settle processes and lawsuits. He himself had often acted on the principles laid down in this work, and by means of arbitration, established peace in a family from whence it had been banished more than a century.

For several years the pious counsellor had been troubled with asthma; when he suffered most from it, he used to say, *Amplius lava me Domine, Wash me still more, Lord.* His sight grew so bad

in 1750, that he could no longer read or write. The following year he grew quite blind; his friends greatly alarmed, sent for the most experienced physicians; but the patient besought them to let him finish his jubilee in peace, for, added he, "I have asked of God, to permit me to die at the end of it." This holy solemnity terminated 12th January, 1752. The 25th he went twice to the church, and remained there a long time; the 26th his weakness would not permit him to rise, and he assured them he would die on the feast of the Purification. Being reproached by a pious friend with having exhausted his strength: "Alas!" said he, "I have never done any thing for God, though I lived as long again, I should not think I had done enough for him." All who visited him went away edified at his pious exhortations, which seemed to acquire more strength as he approached nearer his term.

The 30th January the pious old man communicated fasting; this day and the following he only spoke of God, and with an unction which affected all. The 1st February he received Extreme Unction at his own desire, and with the most lively sentiments of compunction, holding in his hand the crucifix which he had worn while in health. The priest wished to give him then the holy Viaticum, but Joseph besought him to reserve that happiness for the next day, the feast of his good mother, as he usually called the Blessed Queen of angels; however, he yielded to their solicitations that he would be communicated then. We shall not attempt to describe the fervour he displayed at this last reception of his God and Saviour; the assistants were in tears, and he seemed thenceforward as one of the elect. Having asked the clergyman to read the gospel of St.

John, "*In the beginning was the Word*," to which he listened with the deepest attention.

He solemnized the dawn of this so much desired feast, by a sensible increase of piety, uniting in spirit in all the offices of the church, and speaking admirably of the divine Infant Jesus, his blessed mother, holy Simeon, and the different things connected with the holy feast of the Purification. During the day his Confessor not finding him weaker, said he hoped God would prolong his life some time. "Wait, till to-night, dear Father," said Joseph, "come then, I entreat you, to make the recommendation of my soul." While the bell announced his agony, (as is the custom in catholic countries,) he invited all in his chamber to kneel and recite with him the hymn to the B. Virgin, Ave Maris Stella; Bright mother of our Maker, hail, &c. He answered to the prayers which were recited with great peace and consolation, and the recommendation of the soul ended, the venerable man recited in an audible voice the canticle of Simeon, *Now, Lord, dismiss thy servant in peace, &c.* The man of God remained with this terrestrial angel till after seven o'clock, admiring all he witnessed. Having again intreated him to read the gospel, *In the beginning was the Word*, at the words, *Et Verbum caro factum est*, "And the Word was made flesh," he uncovered his head with profound humility, and testified so great a joy, that he seemed in a sort of rapture. This delicious contemplation continued till he expired. He could no longer make long prayers, but the transports of his heart were indicated on his countenance. He seemed not to be near his end, and yet, when the clock struck nine, he calmly said, *An hour and a half remains to live.* His confessor having gone to take a little rest, not supposing

his penitent yet dying, "God will provide in his absence," said Joseph, "my end is near." His prediction was verified, at ten o'clock he peaceably slept in the Lord, having attained the advanced age of seventy-two years.

When the news of his death was made public, the concourse of persons to see his remains was immense. The secular and regular clergy, followed by all the citizens, formed his funeral procession; four ecclesiastics in minor orders carried his precious remains to the church of our Lady, in which he was interred.

The graces *conditionally* solicited and obtained by the intercession of this admirable man, and the vows offered at his tomb, form his most eloquent epitaph.

Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord.



MARY GUYARD MARTIN,
 IN RELIGION,
 SISTER MARY OF THE INCARNATION,
*Foundress and first Superioress of the
 Ursulines in Canada.*

TESTIMONY OF THE BISHOP OF QUEBEC TO THE LIFE
 THIS SERVANT OF GOD.

“WE have read with admiration the life of the venerable Mother Mary of the Incarnation, religious Ursuline; we have therein found nothing contrary to faith or morality, on the contrary, it appears to us fit to excite religious to tend to the sanctity of their state, and all the faithful to solid virtue. We feel greatly indebted to God for our acquaintance with his servant; having placed her under our pastoral conduct, we can truly say she was ornamented with all the virtues in a most eminent degree; particularly with such a gift of prayer, and so perfect a union with God, that she conserved his divine presence amidst the most embarrassing affairs and the different occupations to which her vocation obliged her. She was dead to herself; Jesus alone lived and acted in her. God having chosen her to commence the establishment of the holy order of St. Ursula in Canada, endowed her in great plenitude with the spirit of the Institute. She was a perfect

superior, an excellent mistress of novices, capable of every employ in a religious community. Her life, common externally, but interiorly all divine, was a living rule for the sisters. Her zeal for souls, particularly for the conversion of the savages, was so ardent and extensive, that she seemed to bear them all in her heart; we doubt not that it was her prayers procured for this infant church, in great measure, the favours that have been conferred on it, and are persuaded that the perusal of this life will be productive of good, as was the conversation of this servant of God while on earth, which is all we seek.

✠ FRANCIS, BISHOP.

"Given at Quebec, 12th November, 1677."

Mary Guyard, so celebrated in the annals of the church under the name of Sister Mary of the Incarnation, was born at Tours in France, 18th October, 1599. Her father, Florent Guyard, a silk mercer, was more distinguished by his probity than by the goods of fortune. Her mother, Jane Michelet, descended from the house of Bourdaiziere, inherited none of the wealth of her respectable ancestors. The infancy of Mary passed without any incident worth relating.

The first inclination she manifested, was a great charity and compassion for the sick and the poor. She delighted in being in their company, rendered them all the services she could, and would willingly have suffered in their stead. It pained her very much when she had not the means of relieving them. At the age of seventeen her parents got her married; her natural gaiety caused them to think this state more suit-

able for her than the cloister. Her husband, Mr. Martin, gave her great uneasiness; he was the innocent source of many chagrins. But her pains or afflictions never caused her to neglect the least of her duties, her conduct on this point well deserves the imitation of heads of families. Sound reason and great prudence directed all her steps. She never adopted the error of those who substitute chimerical obligations for essential duties, and thereby introduce disorder into their families, and draw piety into disrepute.

Mary was a real mother to the numerous workmen employed in her business; we cannot describe the care she took of their health, nor her attention in providing for their wants. They deeply felt their obligations, and evinced their filial confidence in a tender affection for her, whether at the sight of what she suffered, or the unalterable patience with which she endured all. Sometimes they could not behold her without sighing, or surprise and admiration so suspended their pity, that they were almost beside themselves. Her husband, too, greatly esteemed her; the more he knew her worth, the more sorry he felt at rendering her unhappy.

Neither the multitude of her cares, nor a succession of afflictions, destroyed Mary Guyard's inclination for solitude. In vain would we seek a woman only eighteen years, engaged in extensive business and charged with a numerous household, and without any other guide in the ways of God than "*the interior law of charity*," says St. Augustine, such perfect exactness to our duties, great love of prayer and heroic patience. She used to say candidly that no person knew what the bounty of God operated in her soul; in course of time

she expressed in these following terms, what then passed within her.

“The divine majesty, not content with giving me a disgust for the vanity of the world, and fortitude to support the crosses He was pleased to send me, fortified my interior spirit, and infused into my soul a strong desire of receiving the holy Sacraments. I acquired in these fountains of grace more interior vigour, a great consolation, and a lively faith of the holy mysteries of faith. It is true that the religious sentiments in which my parents, who were very pious, brought me up in, laid a good foundation for the edifice of virtue and piety. This strong faith caused me to perform many good works, it created in me a spirit of prayer which perfected me in every grace—I had no inclination but for piety. The oftener I received the Sacraments, the more I desired them, because I found in them my life, my strength, and a strong attractive to prayer.”

Mary's assiduity in hearing the word of God, was a great support. She doubted not, when in Canada, that the Lord, in giving her a relish for sermons, &c., had planted in her soul the seed of that zeal for the salvation of souls, which caused her since to undertake such great things. Thus, in a letter to her son, she says, “From my infancy God seemed to prepare me for the function I exercise; my mind was oftener in remote countries, considering the actions of those who laboured to extend the kingdom of God, than in the place I dwelt. My heart was united in an extraordinary manner with apostolic souls. O how necessary it is to profit of every attractive to good, the least of these graces is of great profit, and requires exact correspondence, though its effect were only transitory; but generally, these are so many pre-

dispositions to great works, or they belong to that chain of benefits by which God intends to save us. When we misuse them we know not the greatness of our loss, nor the danger to which we expose ourselves thereby."

After the divine word, there is no external means employed by the Church to lead us to God more efficacious than the ceremonies of our religious worship; they made on Mary Guyard a great impression, and show how deeply she was founded in the spirit of Christianity. Such were her happy sentiments when death snatched away her spouse, leaving her an infant son, with little or no means of support. Her trials were excessive, as she herself admits, she knew not what to do. But God was her resource, she reposed in Him all her confidence, and He rendered her, by his grace and strength, superior to all her misfortunes.

"I firmly believe," said she, "that God was with me, so that neither loss of goods, nor lawsuits, nor the indigence in which my son and I were plunged, gave me the least uneasiness. I had very little experience, but the divine Spirit, who occupied me interiorly, filled me with faith and confidence, and helped me to succeed in all my undertakings. We have no reason to be surprised that a God who never lets Himself be surpassed in liberality, poured out His favours so profusely on this soul who had no reserve with him, and who entirely relied on His Providence. Scarcely had she time to reflect on her state of destitution, than several advantageous proposals of a second marriage were made her. Her wisdom and virtue, and great talent for business held her in place of riches; they caused her to be regarded as the happiness, and even as the treasure of whomsoever she espoused. It would seem that God

willed she should not refuse such favourable occasions of providing for herself and her son, but a wisdom superior to that of men taught her to view things under a different aspect. She declared, though only nineteen years old, she would not consent to a second union; that God, to whom she had consecrated him, would provide for her son, and take equal care of her; that as He had deprived them of their property, He would give them other means of support, and, in fine, that she thought she did more for her son by thus placing him under the wings of Providence, than if she amassed him great treasures. We shall see hereafter that it was neither a spirit of independence, nor caprice, nor indolence, the ordinary fruits of misguided devotion, that inspired Mary with this resolution. She was, indeed, ever remote from tempting God, or from refusing to sacrifice the sweets of solitude when charity required it. She often threw herself, for her neighbour, into greater embarrassments than those of a second marriage. Hence, the part she took may be safely attributed to His divine inspiration, who alone can subject hearts, and who wished to give in her person a striking proof that "*the folly of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God stronger than men.*" Every thing now prospered with her, and her relations entertained great hopes of her succeeding in her commerce.

But the Spirit of God, by whom alone she was conducted, soon gave her an ardent desire of quitting public life, and at the same time facilitated to her the means; nothing now required her remaining in business. She discharged her servants except one, and dressed in a manner that denoted an absolute divorce with the world, notwithstanding the entreaties of her

friends not to bury thus the talent she had for trade and business. Her father having taken her home, she dwelt in the most retired part of the house, having no occupation, save that of educating her son and contemplating celestial truths. This young man proved himself worthy of such a mother; until he reached the age of twelve years, was never out of her sight, and has since declared that he was transported out of himself when he remembered her salutary advice and instructions. By the celestial life she led, the inflamed sighs she continually sent forth, her modest and recollected air, her attention over herself removed from the eyes of creatures as if she had been in their company, it was easy to conclude, he said, that she never lost sight of the divine presence.

But this great application to God did not cause her to forget her neighbour. She knew the obligations of a christian widow, and not being able to relieve the poor by alms, she rendered them the services most painful to nature. She sought out the indigent who were covered with sores and ulcers, and assigned them a time for coming to her; after placing them in an arm-chair, she knelt down, washed their sores, and applied to them the proper remedies. Her son, who was the only witness of these heroic deeds, says, that she treated these poor members of Christ with the greatest respect. She had scarcely passed a year in this manner, when it was evinced that charity had more influence over her than self-interest. One of her sisters, engaged in extensive business, asked her to come and assist her: at first, the proposal alarmed her, and she felt some repugnance to sacrifice to friendship that repose to which she had sacrificed her fortune; yet, after

consulting heaven, she willingly complied with her sister's wish, and God did not fail to recompense her. Now guided by one of the most enlightened directors of his day, and instructed by the perusal of the Introduction to a Devout Life of St. Francis de Sales, she made a rapid progress in evangelical perfection. God, at this time, imprinted in her soul so elevated an idea of the purity a soul should have to be worthy of being consecrated to him, that it cannot be imagined how sensible she became to the least imperfections, nor how carefully she avoided them.

"I every day receive," said she, "new graces from our Lord. Once, during my prayer, he gave me a strong idea of the purity a soul should have to be worthy of being united to Him: I beheld, in an admirable manner, a soul and the Majesty of God; this soul was endowed with a celestial purity, free from all imperfection. She united herself to God, and he attracted her like a sacred diamond to bury her in Himself. Ever after, I had a continual care that nothing might approach my heart which could impede its union with its only good. One day, that I committed a light fault, I was filled with fear and confusion before the Majesty of God. He said to me interiorly, 'If a painter drew a beautiful picture, would he be content that a person might defile it?' This humbled me still more, and showed me evidently what purity God requires in the soul, and how earnestly he desires she might advance in virtue."

Meantime, it would seem that Mary Guyard's sister had no other object in asking her to reside with her, than to make her a common drudge; she was obliged to perform the most abject employs, those for which she indeed was not destined; but

God, in the secrets of His Providence, permitted them to think her incapable of any other. Thus, for three or four years she was exposed to continual humiliations from the masters and servants. Far from complaining of this unkind treatment, she found it insufficient to satisfy her insatiable desire of crosses and humiliations. She regarded her sister and her husband as her best friends, and took great care of the domestics when ill, notwithstanding their rudeness and bad treatment. Such admirable conduct could not fail of gaining the heart of Him, who only invites us to love Him, that he may testify towards us reciprocal love. He indeed made her advance rapidly in the way of perfection: having placed in her soul the foundation of a solid humility, a great purity of heart, and a perfect abnegation. As soon as she had reached the age of twenty-one years, she was allowed to make a vow of perpetual chastity; no sooner had she thus consecrated herself to God, than she recognised by a great increase of graces, how acceptable had been her sacrifice.

After four years had passed in this manner, her confessor, wishing to put a period to her trials, showed her sister how cruel and unjust it was to treat her in such a manner, who in no wise deserved it, and from whom she could derive other more essential services. This was sufficient; her sister and brother-in-law now begged her to take the whole management of their affairs, and she was obliged to accede, whatever might be her repugnance, since it was the will of her confessor. Her brother-in-law was commissary general for the transport of merchandize through all France, and held a considerable office in the artillery, and had likewise other affairs to trans-

act, which caused him to keep a great number of domestics; the charitable widow superintended all, and yet neglected none of her former occupations, which were the more dear to her as they were accompanied by humiliations. In the midst of so many embarrassments, she lost not her application to God, nor was her progress in virtue at all impeded. Her soul each day soared anew to heaven, and became more and more united to Jesus Christ by the most ineffable communications, the detail of which would only suit souls far advanced in the way to perfection. Suffice it to say, that God rewarded the pious efforts of this holy woman to please him, by continually disposing her for the accomplishment of his designs. Whilst these wonders of grace were internally operated in her, she only appeared, as to the exterior, occupied with domestic affairs, and which would have overwhelmed any other less faithful and courageous. She endeavoured to procure the salvation of the numerous servants and workmen connected with her sister's establishment, and found nothing painful or abject when there was question of preventing them from committing sin, or of inducing them to some good action. She had so far gained their confidence, that they candidly gave her an account of their whole conduct. Profiting of their good dispositions, she sometimes assembled them to instruct them in their duties. When they failed to follow her advice, she reproved them with zeal and charity: all were submissive to her as children to their mother; she was their refuge in wants, their mediatrix with the master when they incurred his displeasure. When sick, she waited on and served them, and procured them every advantage within her reach.

Her care of others did not diminish her zeal

for her own perfection; in effect, it sometimes became that devouring fire mentioned in the sacred text, consuming in her every thought and sentiment which had not God for its object. What we know of her spirit of penance, proves the grace God communicates to those whom he wishes to form for himself, for she treated her body most rigorously. When she considered the necessity of satisfying for sin, uniting herself to the cross of her Saviour, she submitted to every pain, and imposed on herself innumerable privations for her offences and those of the world.

As it was the education of her son alone retained her in the world, he having now attained his twelfth year, she determined on obeying the voice of the Lord, who called her to the religious life, and began to think seriously of choosing an institute. The perusal of St. Teresa's works, inclined her at first to the Carmelites, but Providence destined her for the Ursulines, who just then founded a convent at Tours, their functions agreeing better with her great desire of labouring for her neighbour, than those of other religious. To follow her vocation to this holy institute, she rejected the advantageous offers of the superior general of the Feuillantines, and those of the Bishop of Dôl, who both wished to have her, the former in a monastery of his order, the latter in a convent of the Visitation, which he intended founding in his diocese. The devil raised several obstacles to the accomplishment of her pious desires, but all were happily surmounted, so after having regulated her affairs, and provided for the spiritual and corporal wants of her son, some hours before she entered the convent, she took him aside, and spoke to him in the following terms: it is to himself we are indebted for detail.

"My Son," said she, "I have to tell you a secret hitherto concealed from you, because you were not old enough to understand its importance; but now, that your reason begins to become more ripe, and that I am on the point of executing my design, I cannot any longer hide it from you. From the time of your father's death, God has given me a great desire of being a nun; this desire became stronger in time, and if I have not executed it, it is because I did not wish to leave you, thinking that your tender age required my presence. I did not wish to abandon you without your knowledge, though I could do so; for when there is question of a person's salvation, and there now is of mine, no one's permission is necessary; but I did not wish to afflict you, and hence I have taken you aside to ask your consent. God wills it, my child, and if we love Him, we shall submit; it is for Him to command, and for us to obey. If our separation afflicts you, remember God confers on me a great honour in calling me thus to serve him; besides, I shall pray for you continually—are you not satisfied then I should go?" "But," said the little boy in a voice half broken by sighs, "I shall see you no more." "O do not say that," replied his mother, "you will see me as often as you please; sure the Ursuline Convent is next door." "Well," said he, "in that case I am satisfied!" The virtuous woman then resumed, "Since you are content, my son, behold, I withdraw; I leave you no property, God will be your inheritance, as he has been mine. You do not lose your mother in losing me, for I give you another, who can and will do infinitely more for you—I mean, the ever blessed Virgin: call her your mother, go to her in all your wants, reminding her you are her son, and she will take care of you. My sister promises

to provide for you, till God disposes of you according to the order of his Providence; obey her as you would me, respect your relations, honour all men, avoid bad company, frequent the society of those only who love God, frequently approach the holy sacraments, pray devoutly, give yourself entirely to God, and he will take care of you; whatever state you may be in, may he be ever with you my dear child." After speaking thus, she arose and went to the Ursulines, her son walked by her side bathed in tears. From that moment he became the child of Providence, having no other wealth than the instructions and example of his pious mother.

The first moments of her new career were not exempt from pains; her friends pressed her to return to the world, and went so far with their entreaties, that she feared the nuns would have dismissed her. But the first trials ceased, the Jesuits took charge of her son, at the suit of the archbishop of Tours, and Sister Mary of the Incarnation as she was called in religion, experienced that the sacrifices made to God by parents, invariably turn to the profit of their children.

She had very soon to combat trials of another kind; she was tried by every temptation, all the powers of hell seemed armed against her, and Heaven seemed to abandon her to her own resources. Nevertheless, her virtue and resignation were not diminished; these trials only fortified her, and disposed her for the reception of new favours. The mother of the Incarnation was not one of those who, only occupied with projecting an uncommon sanctity in perspective, absolutely neglect to practise the virtues proper to their present state, particularly humility of heart, and exactness to all their duties. She never lost sight

of the designs of God over her, and which he insensibly developed, and her attention to them only increased her application to the duties imposed on her.

No sooner had she pronounced her vows, than she was charged with the direction of the novices. We cannot describe the exertions she used, to make them acquire the spirit of the institute, and she was endowed with a great facility in giving religious instruction. But she did not confine herself to words or exhortations. She composed for the use of these young persons a catechism, regarded as the best of the kind extant in our language. It has been published under the title of *The Christian School*, and matters are therein laid down with such order and precision, and passages from the scriptures so happily applied, as greatly enhances the reputation of the pious author. There was found among her papers, several sentences which she frequently put under the eyes of her novices, we shall content ourselves with citing the following.

I. We should every day commence to love God, believing that the day before we did not truly love him, seeing nothing in the past but defects and imperfections.

II. A soul is never content, as long as she reflects too much on herself, and too little on God.

III. The nearer we approach God, the more we know, and are humbled at our nothingness, though we may be already possessed of great perfection.

IV. Our anxiety to finish one thing in order to begin another, renders both imperfect.

V. The most effectual mode of benefiting ourselves and succouring the church militant, triumphant, and suffering, is to pray and suffer.

Behold the food with which the mother of the

Incarnation nourished her children in Jesus. We need not then be astonished at the perfection to which they arrived, nor at the number of Saints which the congregation of St. Ursula gave to heaven. One of the most distinguished for sanctity among the daughters of the holy mother, was Angélique de la Valliere, who, after ennobling her order by the practice of the most heroic virtues, offered herself to God in quality of victim, to procure the conversion of her illustrious niece the Duchess de la Valliere, mistress of Louis 14th, and thus procured the church one of the rarest examples of christian penance. No employ could better suit the inclinations of the mother of the Incarnation, than that of guiding the novices. To make Jesus Christ known and loved, was the object of all her thoughts, the sum total of her desires. "O eternal Father," she used to exclaim, "give me a voice loud enough to be heard at the extremities of the earth, that I may publish in all places how worthy is my divine Spouse of reigning in all hearts." The Jesuits established in Canada, as well as those among the Hurons, for a long time desired the establishment of the Ursulines at Quebec. Father Paul, superior general of the mission, in the annual relation of what was edifying in the infant church, according to the custom of the missionaries, thus expressed himself, "Could there be not found some holy soul who will collect for the poor *little* savages the blood of her Spouse, Jesus Christ?"

Just then lived at Alençon a young lady very rich, named Magdalen de Chauvigny, relict of Mr. de la Peltrie, of the house of Tounoys. She had received from nature most happy dispositions, and from her parents such an excellent education, that she became the darling of her family, and

the admiration of all who knew her. As soon as she was capable of reflecting, she felt that God wished to be the master of her heart, and took measures to enter into a monastery. But God had other designs, and destined her to join the Mother of the Incarnation; he would not permit that these two women might pursue a course, which, depriving the one of goods, and the other of a knowledge of business, would incapacitate them for the important work he intended to confide to them.

Magdalen then married Mr. de la Peltrie in obedience to her parents: he died soon; she had only one daughter, who came into the world only to increase the number of the predestined. Now disengaged, she thought at once of executing her former project of entering a monastery; but while she for the present applied herself to the relief of the poor, for whom she had always great compassion, her zeal changed its object, and she felt interiorly pressed to pass into foreign countries, to labour for the salvation of souls. Thus disposed, the relation of Father Paul fell into her hands, and its perusal made on her so great an impression, that she determined on devoting herself and her large fortune to the salvation of the little savages. An enterprise so unexampled, should not be entirely resolved upon without having consulted God; this Magdalen did, and heaven delayed not to enlighten her by a means which bordered on the marvellous. She was attacked by a severe illness, and to procure her re-establishment, promised to devote the rest of her life to foreign missions, and her health was instantly restored.

Meantime while all promised success, God purified more and more by divers sorts of trials the mother of the Incarnation, and while Madame de

la Peltrie prepared to execute her vow, she met such opposition as would have overthrown a fortitude less invincible than her own; indeed, her enterprise was rendered for a time physically impossible. Her father absolutely required her to marry again, and perceiving her repugnance, declared if she refused him this satisfaction, it would occasion his death. This greatly afflicted her generous and affectionate heart; not knowing what course to pursue, she sought to give another direction to her father's desire, when, lo! he was called out of life. But new difficulties awaited her. Some of her friends, seeing with vexation the rich presents she gave to the churches, and her liberality to the poor, took the resolution of declaring her incapable of managing her property, and only fit to waste and mispend it. The president at Caen gave sentence in their favour, but the Parliament of Rouen annulled it; then she no longer thought but of proceeding to Paris, and terminating her grand affair. The moment she arrived in the capital, she consulted thereon persons of the most eminent sanctity. Those whom she spoke to oftenest were Father Gourdren, general of the Oratorians, and St. Vincent of Paul, the illustrious founder of the Lazarites and sisters of charity. Both these men, after having maturely examined her design, and the attractive she conceived for it, assured her it came from Heaven; all the rest whom she consulted thought so too, so she was now only occupied in planning its execution.

Father Poncet, of the Society of Jesus, was then preparing to sail for Quebec, and Magdalen having consulted him on the choice of subjects for the little community at Canada, he immediately pointed out the mother of the Incarnation. He

wrote to her concerning it, and though hitherto unacquainted with the project, she was by no means surprised, for she felt that the designs of God on her were about to be accomplished. The news gave her extreme joy, as appears in her letter to M. de la Peltrie. The saints being closely united with God, have little to do to be perfectly so among themselves. Virtue is the strongest bond of friendship. Madame de la Peltrie intended to sail instantly; she surmounted the difficulty by fitting out a vessel at her own expense, and then occupied herself in choosing the religious who were to accompany her. When she decided for the mother of the Incarnation, the archbishop of Tours was solicited for permission to let her depart; this he gave most willingly, and the venerable woman proceeded to join M. de la Peltrie at Paris, there to await the moment of departure. But a great storm was now raised against the Mother of the Incarnation. Her sister, quite furious at learning she was going to leave France and devote herself to teach the little savages to know and love God, put all in play to upset her pious design. To persuade her that by such a course she would leave her son without resource, she revoked in presence of a notary the pension she had allotted him in gratitude for the services rendered her by his mother, and the blessing she drew down on her affairs. This step having proved ineffectual towards moving her pious sister, she stirred up her nephew against the designs of Providence; he came to meet his mother between Orleans and Paris, and showed her in a letter from his aunt to him, the frightful abandonment in which her voyage to Canada was going to plunge him. "Alas!" said she on perusing it, "what artifices the world adopts to cross the designs of God!"

Then turning to her son, "it is eight years," continued she, "since I quitted you to give myself to God; have you ever wanted any thing?"—"No," he replied. "Well," she continued, "should not the experience of the past animate your confidence for the future? In separating myself from you for the love of our divine Lord, and in obedience to his will, I prayed him to be a Father to you, and He has, you see, been so beyond our most sanguine hopes. He will continue to be so if you are faithful, if you confide in His amiable Providence. 'Nothing is wanting to those who fear him.' I am leaving you to go to Canada in obedience to his command; He could not confer on me a greater honour than to select me for the execution of this great design; if you loved me you would feel joy thereat." She spoke in such a noble and tender accent, that the young man, quite gained over, forgot his personal interests, and went to tell his friends he would never ask them for any thing, and was quite ready to sacrifice his beloved mother. It is difficult to say if we should more admire the faith of the mother, than the submission of the new Isaac, her son.

When the holy woman arrived at Paris, the Queen expressed a wish to see her, she was also visited by most of the ladies at court. The duchess d'Aiguillon offered to take charge of her son and advance him in the world, but as she only desired for him the treasure of evangelical poverty, considering riches a great obstacle to salvation, she gratefully thanked her, but firmly refused the offer. This beloved child, but beloved in God, afterwards became a religious Benedictine of the congregation of St. Maur, and is the celebrated Dom Claude Martin.

The Lord now consummated the generous de-

sires of his servant the 4th of May, feast of St. Monica, 1639. They arrived early in the port of Dieppe. The mother of the Incarnation and two other Ursulines had been conducted from their monastery to that of the Hospitalieres, to take three religious of that order who were also going to form an establishment in Quebec under the patronage, and by the liberalities of the duchess d'Aiguillon. Every moment seemed long to the pious widow to expose her life for God; "I had little to risk," said she, "my life was nothing, but I joined thereto the sacrifice of my heart and affections. When just ready to embark, I prostrated myself in this disposition before the holy Sacrament in the choir of the mother's Hospitalieres, and I offered myself to God as a perpetual holocaust. At once I found He possessed my soul, and gave it movements suitable to the action I was about to perform. The wind soon filled our sails after we went on board, and I quitted France for ever, firmly resolved to consecrate my life to procuring the subjection of the savage tribes to the sweet yoke of Jesus Christ."

Thus the Mother of the Incarnation saw fulfilled what had been previously foreshown to her, as she herself relates. "About the year 1633," says she, "soon after I had made my profession, having retired one evening after matins to our cell, it seemed to me, in a light slumber into which I fell, that I caught hold of the hand of a young secular lady, and walked forward with her so as to precede her, yet without leaving her behind; our road lay towards a place of embarkation; we remained together during the voyage, and at length arrived at a most extensive country. On landing, we ascended the coast by a passage about the breadth of a large gate, at the opening

of which appeared a man, clothed after the manner in which the apostles are represented to us. Having made a signal for me to advance towards the place of our habitation, I found on arriving there a little church, and a fine well-built monastery. Without stopping to consider the beauty of its structure, I felt powerfully attracted towards the little church, my companion being still with me. On advancing, we soon saw the extent of this vast country. It appeared to me covered with a thick fog; a church was visible in the midst, but almost buried in darkness. The atmosphere was involved in a frightful gloom which seemed impenetrable.

“My companion then quitted me and descended a little into the thickness of the fog, but I only longed to be soon at the little church pointed out to me. It was made of fine white marble, ornamented with ancient sculpture. The Holy Virgin was seated in the midst, regarding the vast plain, and bearing the divine Infant. The Mother and the Son appeared so amiable, that I thought I could never get close enough to them to satisfy my devotion. When I did, I was greatly amazed to find that they were not of marble but of flesh, and that the blessed Virgin, after looking pitifully on this abandoned country, stooped her head to tell the little Jesus. I thought she mentioned my name, which interested me still more. She appeared from fifty to sixty years old, and so beautiful that the impression is still new in my imagination.

“I awoke with a strong idea of the conversion of this country, but knew not still what the vision meant, until another day in the choir, having received a new impression of it in all its circumstances, the divine Majesty said to me interiorly,

‘It is Canada I have shown thee; thither thou art to go to build a house for Jesus and Mary.’ Now I had never before heard of such a place, except when persons, to frighten children, said, I shall send you to Canada. I cannot doubt that the man who directed my course, and who seemed to be the guardian of the country, was the great St. Joseph, for Jesus and Mary could not be separated from him.”—So far our Mother of the Incarnation.

Besides the six religious we have named, Madame de la Peltrie, a female attendant, and Father Thimond of the Society of Jesus, who was just then nominated superior general of the Canadian missions, in place of Father Paul, embarked in the same vessel.

During the voyage, which lasted three months, the nuns every day chaunted the office in two choirs, the Ursulines at one side, and the Hospitalieres at the other. Mass was celebrated every day, except during one fortnight, that the agitation of the sea would not permit. After escaping many dangers, the vessel arrived at Quebec, 1st August, 1639.

The first thing we did on landing, writes the Mother of the Incarnation, was to kiss that ground on which we came to spend our lives in the service of God and our poor savages, we then went to the church and chaunted the Te Deum. The governor afterwards conducted us to the fort, and after dinner, he himself, with all the Jesuit Fathers then at Quebec, led us to the places destined for our respective habitations.

Next day, the superior general and Father Paul, who just then resigned his office, caused us to enter the nearest huts of our dear brethren the poor savages. We were delighted on hearing them

sing the divine praises in their own tongue. The first christian committed her daughter to us, and in a short time we had a tolerable number, besides all the French girls capable of instruction. While we expected the erection of a monastery, we were lodged in a small cabin with only two rooms. Very soon it became an hospital, for the small-pox broke out among our little savages, and three or four of them died. As we had no furniture, the beds were on the floor, and the place was so narrow that we were obliged to walk over them. God inspired my sisters with such fortitude, that they cheerfully bore this extreme indigence, and felt no disgust at the foulness of the savages. Our foundress was foremost in exercising that charity for which we had occasion every instant; although very delicate, she zealously applied to the most disgusting occupations. It was necessary, in order to attain our end in coming hither, to learn the language of the savages; this was indeed, something new for us, for it was so barbarous that every word seemed to stick in my throat. It cost us much pains to learn it, but by the assistance of Jesus Christ, we were soon able not only to understand, but even to speak it.

However fervent the zeal of these religious women, the smallness of their number, the inconvenience of their lodging, the dirt and filthiness of the savages, which surpassed all we can say of it, and the little means of remedying these evils, would soon have caused them to sink, if a house were not built, and some relief sent them from France. The letters from the Mother of the Incarnation to the Ursulines at Paris and at Tours, so excited them to share in the painful mission, that in a short time there was a pretty large community assembled at Quebec, and she

was by common consent elected first superior. It was not by disguising what she had to suffer, that she obtained this supply of subjects; she dissembled nothing on the contrary, and yet the charity of these heroic souls was proof against all. The community, from increase of numbers, felt again its first inconvenience; a house only large enough for five or six persons, was very incommodious when the number was so increased. It is extraordinary how they lived in such a confined habitation, confounded with the little savage girls whom they instructed, and whose bad odour rendered it impossible almost to take any food; but the divine love which inflamed them, caused them to find in their sufferings, delights which are not tasted in the most happy and comfortable life. "Thanks be to God," used the Reverend Mother to say, "the tenderness He has given me for the savages is always the same; I carry them all in my heart, endeavouring by my poor prayers to effect their salvation; I bear them in my soul, being ready to sacrifice my life to gain them to the Lord."

As her community was formed of religious from Paris and Tours, whose rules varied, though both were Ursuline, it was necessary to establish uniformity in the house at Quebec, and she happily succeeded. We may judge how fervently God was served by those who had sacrificed all to make him known to a savage people; indeed, those alone who know how sweet the Lord is, can form an idea of the peace and joy these pious women felt in a house where their only satisfaction was found in that which makes nature shudder. Their virtues would have honoured the solitaries of Thebes, and their penance was not less rigorous, but all became easy to them under a superior

who only made them feel her right to command by alleviating their pains, and performing in their stead the most disgusting offices. Besides, they still breathed in Canada that air of sanctity, exhaled at all times by infant churches; the Founders of this latter still lived, and as our holy mother used to say, it was impossible not to aspire to great perfection, having for conductors *men* who retraced the lives of the apostles. "We have here," said she in one of her letters, "men so disengaged from all, that they seem to be no longer of the earth; God operates in them so admirable a detachment, that among them there is question only, of who will go to the most remote and dangerous places, deprived of all human succour. The desires they form for each other, are thus expressed: '*Go—we are delighted to have you sent to this frightful place; may you have the happiness of there giving your life for God.*' Are not these true imitators of a crucified Master, and can we remain tepid at the sight of such zeal? shall we not advance, having persons for guides who run with giant steps in the way of God?"

To judge by appearances, the Mother of the Incarnation had nothing more to desire on earth. In possession of what she had so long sought—in the midst of a savage people, to whom she from morning till night announced the kingdom of God—in the continual practice of what penance has of most anstere, and charity of most eminent—but we see by her letters she had much to suffer, and that she endured contradictions of every species; however, nothing was capable of surmounting her firmness. In vain did the greatest storm of tribulation try to ingulph the vessel of her soul; she remained immoveable in God, ever believed herself worthy the pains she suffered, and always

advanced with equal pace in the path of perfection. She considered these sufferings, partly as a consequence of the offer she made to God in favour of her son at a time when he showed no inclination to follow in her own pious footsteps. She made the same sacrifice in favour of one of her nieces, whom she learned to be in great danger of losing her soul: this young woman since took the name and place of her virtuous aunt, and died among the Ursulines in the odour of sanctity.

“The fear I had,” wrote our holy mother to her son, “that you might fall into the precipice whither you ran, caused me to agree with God, to bear the punishment due to your sins; lest the pain he would inflict on you, might be the privation of the grace to perform that good which I expected from you. You cannot believe how much I endured in consequence.”

Withdrawn from this abyss by the prayers and sacrifices of his mother, young Martin became one of the ornaments of a religious life. This proves that a parent's prayers can obtain great graces for their children.

We learn from the correspondence of this admirable woman with her son towards the end of her life, how pure, elevated, and worthy of the gospel was her affection for him. And here let us justify christian piety from this aspersion, which the world casts upon it, viz. that it stifles natural affection, and reduces us to a sort of egotism; the mother of the Incarnation never ceased to seek the temporal happiness and spiritual advantage of her son, though removed from him by distance of place, and overwhelmed with occupations. In her reply to the letter he wrote her when he forsook the world, she says, “My dearest, and most beloved son, may the love and grace of Jesus

Christ be your portion. I suffered immensely this year on your account, beholding in spirit the dangers which you ran; but our divine Master has calmed my fears, by the persuasion that he would never suffer you to be lost, since I abandoned you only for his love. You have been forsaken by all, and has it not been useful to you? When I quitted you, my anguish was known but by God; I foresaw the bad treatment of our relations, and considering the excess of human infirmity, I feared all for your soul. The good duchess d'Aiguillon offered to provide for you; but knowing the dangers of prosperity and desiring you might inherit, like myself, the rich treasure of holy poverty, I left you once more in the hands of the mother of mercy, persuaded, that since I was going to risk my life for *her* Son, she would take care of *mine*. And did she not show herself your mother? Can any worldly advantages be compared with those which you enjoy in religion? But being now in the warfare, consider well, my dear child, this sentence of Christ, 'He that puts his hand to the plough and looks back, is not fit for the kingdom of God.' May I learn, by the next fleet, that my vows unremittingly offered the divine Majesty in your favour for twenty years, have been received by him. I every day sacrifice you to his love, on the heart of His beloved Son. May you prove a holocaust worthy His acceptance."

The young cenobite in his reply, having complained that being every day sacrificed on so inflamed an altar, he was not consumed, she says to him, "What, my son! do you think we burn not because we do not feel the flame? we should never be humble if we saw not our wretchedness; it is necessary that we sometimes be insensible as it were to the flame of love, that it may burn more purely."

When he wrote to her on the attractive he experienced for solitude: "You find retreat delightful, my dear son; it indeed is so, one never treats better with God than in silence; but your office is to receive guests and exercise charity towards them. When a person loves his cell too much, it is well to deprive him of it for some time. Your superior exercises you in mortification, it is a sign he loves you and seeks your profit. You delight me, by saying, you seek humiliations, you want them as well as myself, the world gave us a share of them. Be satisfied that we are servants of God, it is the noblest of all titles."

When, on terminating his studies, he wrote to her testifying his joy; she replied, "It is true that the time of study sometimes distracts and hinders a person from sweet interior application; nevertheless, as these studies are only of holy things, they fill the mind with good sentiments. I am sure your solitude will be more pleasant after such speculations. When you shall be shut up in your cell, let us join in chanting interiorly the mercies of God." This young religious man, being one time innundated with divine consolations, she said to him, "You have greatly consoled me, by communicating your interior dispositions. Be most firm in holding yourself near God in the manner he attracts you. Unite yourself to him in this state of tranquillity and repose. I am delighted at your disengagement from creatures, and at your exemption from all desire that they should be engaged with you. Ah! my child, the kingdom of peace is in a heart thus naked of all things, and which, with an holy hatred of itself, delights in destroying the remains of corrupt nature. I bless the Lord for your desire of martyrdom; you are still young, and if you wish to

be faithful to grace, you may suffer a painful one, even without quitting your cell. This desire should be a powerful stimulus to lead a penitent and mortified life. Such is the martyrdom God expects from you." As Dom Claude had a great talent for preaching, his mother wrote to him: "Do you know, my dear son, that I found it impossible to ask for you anything of God, besides the gospel virtues, particularly poverty of spirit? I thank God for your spirit of the interior life; it proceeds from this holy poverty, and will purify whatever remains too human in your exercise of preaching."

As this pious woman recounted to him her combats, and the graces and victories she received from Heaven, he did the same, and made her acquainted with all his spiritual miseries, to which she replied: "Do not be dejected, dear child; continue your charitable care of this lady. It is the novelty of the employ which annoys you; when you are more experienced therein, all your pain will vanish; though it continued, you should not desist; the devil, who does not wish us to exercise charity, often raises such storms to intimidate us. I know a holy man who is a martyr in this point, and yet he pursues it generously; do you do so for the love of God, and the salvation of this soul. We must, like the saints, pass through many tribulations, to attain that purity of mind and body which God demands of us. I am far from numbering myself with them, being a great sinner, but see what I suffered for seven years and more, in different occasions; we cannot lead a spiritual life long without such trials." On another occasion she wrote to him, "You are engaged in many spiritual and temporal affairs; it is difficult for a poor creature to transact such matters without

some little defects; but these faults are not infidelities, but fragilities, which are cured by that fund of union with God, which subsists habitually in the heart and mind; repeated acts of love in this union, wonderfully sanctify a soul. When once God confers on the soul, (and he usually does in this holy union,) the gifts of wisdom and understanding, distractions do not injure her. I beseech him to endow you with both, for His glory and your sanctification, and that of those whom he has placed under your direction."

Another time she wrote, "I do not doubt but your bodily strength is diminished; your retreat, studies, cares, and great austerities are the cause; but we live only to die, the saints have passed through greater difficulties. Take courage then, my child, and spend yourself in the service of our good Master." Again, she wrote, "I thank our Lord for the graces he bestows on you in the interior life. O! what a blessed thing it is to be called and continue faithful in this holy path. The pains you experienced benefited you, and will serve you greatly in the conduct of souls."

"Ah! my dear son," wrote she to him, on learning that he was removed to another monastery, and advanced to one of the principal offices, "who would have believed, or even thought in seeing you and me after your father's death, that you would not only be called by God to the religious profession, but even raised to one of the first employs of the order? Indeed, it is because I have forsaken you for his love, and demanded nothing for your inheritance, but the poverty of his Son. Do you remember, I told you if I abandoned you he would take care of you? Indeed, it was because I felt convinced of it; I never performed an act with more confidence in him than

this." Now, who will say, after perusing these few extracts, that religion destroys human and natural affection?

Trials succeeded trials with the mother of the Incarnation—the persecution of the Iroquois, a neighbouring people, afflicted her, when her other sufferings were at a close. Several Jesuit missionaries were either burned or massacred by this barbarous horde, and all who escaped their fury with the rest of the christian Hurons, were obliged to take refuge in Quebec. "O how sensibly I felt this stroke," writes she, "for the fathers who eluded the fire and sword of the Iroquois, suffered more than those who became their victims. The only consolation I had, was to hope we should have the daughters of these poor fugitive Hurons, and in this expectation I studied their language, for hitherto I had only applied myself to that of the Algonquins and Montagnais.

They were not alone spiritual succours which the good mother procured these poor savages persecuted for their faith; she provided for their corporal wants, with the greatest zeal and tenderness. But a new cross awaited her, a fire destroyed her monastery to the very foundation. This stroke only increased her virtues; and her religious, instructed in the same school, and supported by the same principles, blessed the Lord for having thus despoiled them. But God, who only wished to try them, when every misfortune threatened them—when the English at one side, and the Iroquois at the other, menaced them with destruction, and that their best friends were of opinion they should return to France—the monastery was rebuilt, and with so marked a protection of Heaven, that none could fail to recognize it.

In the midst of all her labours and sufferings,

our servant of God was a living rule; her conduct was uniform and religious. She was the first at every duty, and would have charged herself with every fatigue, if she were not convinced it was no less her duty to see good practised by others, than to do it herself. But her charity and humility made her every day invent new means of deceiving the fervour of her religious, to charge herself with part of their employs, without diminishing their merits. She might be seen almost at the same moment, washing, or caressing, or instructing the little savages; or with the workmen, consoling them in their painful tasks; or serving in the lowest offices of the community, and at the same time performing all the duties which her superiority required. However fatigued, she was always the last to lie down, and the first to rise; ever in prayer or in action, she offered in her person, as well as in her words, the most perfect model of religious perfection. We know not in detail the pains she had to endure; but if God proportioned them, as he generally does, to the celestial favours he conferred on her, they must have been very great. But nothing disturbed the peace of her soul, nor diminished her charity and sweetness towards those who annoyed her most. Her patience seemed miraculous to those who witnessed her bodily pains, during the last eight years of her life.

In 1664 she was attacked by ill health for the first time; she grew better, but never after perfectly recovered. In this state she wished to resign her charge of superior, but was not permitted. To look at her, one would imagine her incapable of any duty; and yet, she was the first at every observance, transacted all the business of the convent, wrote a prodigious number of letters,

and translated immense dictionaries into the language of the savages, to facilitate the study thereof to her religious; in fine, at the age of seventy years, and in a body oppressed with infirmity, she did all what would seem to surpass the energies of a vigorous constitution. Her manner of prayer every day became more simple and sublime. "I am at the feet of the divine Majesty," said she, "with no other words than 'My God! Be thou blessed, O my God!' Days and nights pass in repeating them, I hope I shall expire while they are on my lips."

Her spiritual delights were interrupted by a trial common to the servants of God—a fear of the divine judgments. She bore this assault like all others, and supported herself against it by humility and confidence. This mingling of fear and love, was one of the greatest favours she thought Heaven conferred on her, since it preserved her from the dangers of presumption. Wishing to have her wholly to himself, God deprived her of Madam Peltrie; she died 23rd November, 1671, a most happy death. Since she had been in Canada, she led a hidden life, and seemed to have no other end than to annihilate herself in the minds of men. Poor, austere even to excess, she charged herself with what was most disgusting in the management of the little savages, for whom she had sacrificed all; and under a secular habit she was one of the most perfect models of imitation, which might be proposed to a religious community. Her greatest admirer, because she knew her best, was our mother of the Incarnation; these two great souls were most closely linked by the ties of holy friendship. During her life Madame Peltrie seemed not to be much noticed, but at her death, it was seen how

far her reputation had spread, and how generally it was known that Canada was indebted to her for the establishment of a house, which was of the greatest utility to the colony. Every one made her panegyric, all bewailed her loss; the most solemn obsequies were performed for her in the Ursuline church. The Jesuits paid her the same honours in theirs; *her heart*, as she had desired, was deposited under the step of their high altar, and her funeral oration was pronounced in the same place.

This loss produced the same effect as all others on the mother of the Incarnation; that firmness of soul for which she was so remarkable, did not prevent her evincing all the tenderness of her heart. This had already been remarked, on occasion of the death of a dear religious, who had accompanied her from Tours, *mother Mary of St. Joseph*. She has left us of her an historic eulogy, which has been printed with her letters, and that at once evinces the beauty of her genius and the goodness of her heart. Scarcely three months elapsed after the death of Madam Peltrie, when our mother was taken so ill, that from the fifth day of her malady, the physicians despaired of her life.

Extended on her painful couch, she edified all so much that some who could not be refused, remained the whole day in her chamber. Such sweetness and resignation appeared in her every word and action, as inspired devotion. She rejoiced to see herself crucified with Christ, and had continually on her lips these words of St. Paul: With Christ I am fastened to the cross, (Galat. ii. 19.) She recovered, nevertheless, by a sort of miracle, but her health was never quite re-established. The most painful surgical operations found her almost

impassible ; except one day, when, as they applied a burning caustic, she shivered a little ; this sensibility to pain confused her so much, that she demanded for it as a public scandal. She received the last Sacraments with great fervour, but evinced not the same anxiety to die as she did three months before, because *now* she desired nothing whatsoever but the accomplishment of the will of God ; perhaps it was that she might reach this point of perfection, that her life was prolonged miraculously.

Feeling herself at extremity, she asked once more for the little savages, to bid them a last farewell, and about mid-day 30th April, feast of St. Catherine of Sienna, 1672, she entered into her agony, losing only the power of speech and hearing. She tenderly kissed her crucifix, bathed it with her tears, and after casting a last look at her dear children in Jesus, and heaving a profound sigh, she expired with an expression of joy on her countenance, accompanied with such majesty, that her soul seemed to communicate to her body the glory it possessed.

As for Madame de la Peltrie, with whom this venerable mother was so intimately connected, by the fidelity with which she corresponded to the grace of her vocation, she made a proportionate progress in virtue, during the thirty-three years she survived in Canada. Zeal for the conversion of its inhabitants was her moving spring. She would willingly have run over the forests, mountains, and deserts of this vast country, to cry in the ears of the people who abode in it, that there was a God, a Jesus, a Paradise, and a Hell. But it was necessary to breathe a little, to establish the monastery which she had undertaken, and help her dear daughters in their functions, when she had

fixed them therein. When that was accomplished, about two years after her arrival, she went to Montreal to make new conquests among the savage tribes; but this not sufficing to her zeal, she resolved to go to the country of the Hurons, 300 leagues from Quebec, though the way to it would strike terror into the most courageous heart, until a Jesuit Father having convinced her of the inutility of her visit, she contented herself with founding there a permanent mission.

Being now convinced that she would not fully satisfy her vocation, if she did not concur in the conversion of these poor souls by prayers, abstinences, enclosure with the nuns, and subjection to their rule; she undertook it, and persevered with as great fidelity, as if she had been a religious by profession. She prevented the sisters in what regarded religious discipline, and animated them by her obedience to the Superioress. The bell was never more punctually tolled than when she was ringer, says her historian. In the office of giving out the linen, which she exercised eighteen years, she made a thousand excuses to the nuns, that the things were not so convenient as she desired. She loved the poor exceedingly, and always wished to have one of them with her. When it was objected to her that it were better done to give old torn clothes, which she usually wore, to the members of Christ, she said, she would rather give them new ones if she could.

Her humility caused her to perform for the sick the most abject offices, and with a kindness which charmed all. She took the last place in the choir, refectory, and community. She disliked much the title of foundress, so justly due to her, saying, she was a poor creature who had done nothing but offend God. She never spoke of her-

self but with great humility. One day that the little pensioners were sent to ask her benediction, she said, "My children, to whom do you address yourselves? to the vilest creature on the face of the earth." She was not distinguished from the rest, except by a more striking humility; she adhered to the rule in every point, she sometimes even anticipated the community.

This pious widow dissembled with incredible sweetness the little troubles incident to a religious house, however holy it may be. She always admitted she was wrong, and asked pardon on her knees, saying, "It is I, my dear sister, who have annoyed you, by my pride and impatience. Now do beg of God to convert me, and firmly believe that I love you with all my heart. Though favoured with such a gift of prayer, that she spoke sublimely of holy things to those who visited her, she was most reserved in this matter in the community, and never introduced it except by the way of procuring information. When sometimes at recreation she was pressed to declare her sentiments, she replied, "What shall I say, but that I am always unfaithful to the grace of God?"

A person of robust health could scarcely support the mortifications she exercised on her delicate body. She used to refuse the little comforts which were judged necessary, and when she heard that some soul was in danger of being lost, she redoubled her austerities.

But for her humility she would have approached the holy table every day. To console herself for this privation of her only good, she procured for the monastery the celebration of all the masses she could; and whatever conversation she was engaged in, when the bell announced the holy sacrifice, she at once quitted the parlour.

A soul so full of virtues and merits was fruit ripe for heaven. Our Lord called her to himself the 19th November, 1671, in the sixty-eighth year of her age, after she had endured for seven days a violent pleurisy. She received the last sacraments from Monsieur de Bernieres, grand vicar of Quebec and Superior of the monastery, and nephew of him who had regulated her affairs for Canada. She edified all in her last moments. It was then if ever was fulfilled this of the wise man, "He who fears the Lord, shall be blessed in his latter end."

MADAME CANDIDA HIU,

Grand-daughter of the Chancellor of China.

FROM THE FRENCH OF ABBE CARRON.

THE faith of Jesus Christ having been preached in the vast empire of China, by the fathers of the society of Jesus, in the sixteenth century, was embraced by many. Candida, daughter of James Siu, son of the celebrated Colao, or prime minister of China, a man whose ministry was as glorious to his country, as it was distinguished by his zeal for the propagation of the true faith, was born in the province of Nankin, about the commencement of the seventeenth century. She received in holy baptism the name of Candida, because the ceremony was performed on the feast of the blessed martyr of that name, and was in due time perfectly instructed in the duties of religion, and maxims of salvation, by a mother renowned among the Neophytes* for her piety, and she profited so well of what she heard, that at the age of ten years, she placed herself under the patronage of the most holy Virgin, and promised every day to honour her by the recital of certain prayers. But levity is attendant on youth; Candida sometimes omitted her devotion, until attacked by a violent fever, which she considered the punishment of her fault; she renewed her promise and never after failed therein. At the age of fourteen

* The newly baptized.

years, she lost her good mother, to whom she was greatly endeared, because of her excellent dispositions, and two years after was espoused to a pagan, rich and powerful, named Hiu. She disposed herself for this alliance by the sacraments of Confession and Communion, which should never be omitted on such occasions, and which it is to be feared many neglect or receive badly. The connection was by no means agreeable to her, seeing that she was going to become the companion of a man buried in the darkness of infidelity; but like another Monica, she soon, by her patience and piety, changed him into a second Patricius; he embraced a religion which carried its own evidence along with it, by the sovereignty it exercises over hearts, and became in his turn the supporter of truth. About the same time, her great grandfather was converted at the age of eighty years, by the zeal of the Colao, which filled Candida with joy; she said, she could not sufficiently thank God, for having caused her to be born of a family in which so many were sealed with the glorious character of Christianity. God blessed her marriage by the birth of many children, whom she took care to bring forth anew in Jesus Christ at the font of baptism, and to sow in their tender minds, the principles of the true faith. Two years after his conversion, her husband died the death of the just, leaving her at the age of thirty years charged with the care of eight children. She used all her endeavours to form them to virtue, and had the happiness of seeing her pains crowned with success.

The pious Candida, in the protracted period of forty-three years which she survived her husband, retraced the virtues of those widows whom St. Paul eulogises in his epistle. She set no limits

save those of charity to her zeal. She became the mother of the poor, particularly those gospel poor, whom the desire of spreading the knowledge of God and his Son Jesus Christ, had caused to cross the seas to bear to the infidels the tidings of faith, and the hope of salvation. The Jesuit missionaries, who were then the only labourers in this part of our Lord's vineyard, having lost by the death of her grandfather their most zealous protector, she tried to indemnify them as much as she was able, not only pressing her father, who succeeded to the honours of the Calao, to protect the Jesuits, but even labouring with her sisters and domestics at embroidery and other works, to procure money for their maintenance. She worked so assiduously, that she amassed considerable sums, and was enabled also to relieve thousands of poor, and procure for the new christian churches and altars, every thing necessary for divine worship.

To devote herself more freely to these good works, Candida provided for the management of her household, a girl named Rosalia, whom she also made the distributor of her private alms, and the confidant of her good works. Though otherwise very prudent, and discreet, and pious, the eccentricities of her character rendered her insupportable to the other servants, so that she gave her pious mistress continual occasions of practising patience. Witnessing what she suffered, her confessors urged Madame Hiu to discharge Rosalia, but she generously resolved to bear the annoyance, saying, "Rosalia is exact, faithful, prudent; if I dismiss her, who can I commission to the poor, who will take care of the missionaries and catechists? we must bear with her bad temper then; it is a cross that our Lord sends me for my sins,

happy shall I be, if he receive it in expiation of them!" She received in the same spirit, all the other sufferings which Providence sent her.

Her faith was every day more confirmed by the prodigies operated to propagate the gospel in the Chinese empire. To show how lively it was, we cite the following instance. Learning on one occasion that the missionaries were reduced to such distress, that they no longer possessed common necessaries, she flew to her domestic chapel, and prostrate at the foot of her crucifix, promised to provide for all their wants, and allot for the use of each father such sum as would prevent their ever again falling into the like necessity. She renewed this promise every day, until she had the means (£22,000,) of fulfilling it, which she sent into the different provinces where the missionaries, twenty-five in number, were stationed.

It would be hard to conceive how she could bestow such immense sums without injuring her family, had not she herself revealed it in a letter to Father Francis Brancati, the superior, to remove his delicacy on the matter. It was as follows: "Do not think, my father, that I deprive my children of anything by providing for the missionaries. No, the means come from another source, from the labour of my hands, and those of my maids. These thirty years I have applied myself to different sorts of work, by which I gained some thousand crowns; these I employed in trade by means of two of my servants whom you know; and God has so blessed their commerce, that, after enriching themselves, they have acquired me sufficient means to share with others; so fear no longer, Father, that the money I give you is badly acquired, or may be part of the revenues of my son's office. I would not on any account employ his

wealth in supporting the missions, for I am not quite sure that the means by which magistrates are enriched, are always legitimate.

This father was for many years the confessor of Madam Candida. She introduced him to her father, and it was as much by his great influence, as by the secret endeavours of his pious daughter, that he saw himself able to extend the infant Church of China. Lord James Siu procured him the friendship of the governors and principal mandarins of Nankin, Suchen, Sumkiam, and Kam Hai, so that in a short time the man of God saw this canton or division possessed of ninety churches, forty-five oratories, and three confraternities, besides those of the Holy Virgin, and that of the children, which latter was styled the *congregation of the angels*. The object of one of these three confraternities or associations, was to honour the mystery of the passion and death of our Lord Jesus; the young girls belonging to it assembled every Friday for the purpose of meditating thereon, and sanctified their pious exercises by vigorous mortifications. The women being forbidden to go out by the law of the country, practised the same devotions at home. The fervour of Madam Candida on these occasions was so great, that her confessor was obliged to moderate it, and absolutely forbid her these practices, because of her great age and infirmity. She often complained of this indulgence: "What, father," she used to say, "shall I then do nothing for God, under the pretence of conserving a useless health, while I know that our missionaries, whose life is so precious to the whole empire, practise so many austerities, though overwhelmed with labours? Father Le Faure, for example, passes the night in prayer, and is quite extenua-

ted from fasting, and you wish a sinner like me to do nothing of the kind."

The second congregation was of young men under the patronage of St. Ignatius. The members assembled the first day in each month, and prepared sermons and discourses on the truths of faith, on the feasts and mysteries, which having pronounced in turn, they were, if approved of by the missionaries, sent to preach them the following Sunday in the churches to which they themselves could not go. The fruits of this association were so much the more advantageous, as the Chinese are naturally inclined to compose and recite their works.

But the most useful congregation was that in which sixty catechists, under the inspection of the fathers and protection of Francis Xavier, employed themselves in the instruction of youth in the different parishes. These also visited the houses of the christians, and rendered a written account of the state of each family: as, if they had some pictures of our Lord, if they retained any of their old superstitions, if some child had not been baptised, or if some invalid or aged person was in want of the helps of the sacraments. As the mother and protectress of these societies, Madam Hiu provided for each what they severally needed; she furnished the one with images and pictures of the passion of our Lord, and the other with books printed at her expense, and the different symbols by which the mysteries of religion are rendered intelligible to or brought under the senses, which she caused to be distributed annually. On the feast of St. Michel, 29 September, in each year, this friend to religion made with all possible solemnity, a distribution of premiums to the children of both sexes who had been most

attentive to catechism, that nothing might be omitted which could extend the faith of Christ. She persuaded the missionaries to translate different pious works into the Chinese language, for the instruction of the women who, as we before said, could not attend at the churches. The number of these publications amounted to twenty-six; Madam Candida distributed them in the churches, and made presents of them to all the ladies with whom she was acquainted. It is impossible to describe the good thus produced by these books, the faithful interpreters of the truth, finding entrance into the houses of the infidels, and of the mandarins and governors, to which the missionaries had no access; they began to esteem the doctrine they contained, and the faith of the Europeans obtained respect and veneration. Having nothing so near her heart as the interests of religion, Madam Hiu used all her exertions to convert the young spouse of her son, the Lord Basil. This woman though endowed with a good understanding, was strongly fixed in her false belief, the greatest patience, mildness and address, was necessary to cure her blindness. She at length became the conquest of her pious mother-in-law, and, like her, an apostle of the faith, being scarcely regenerated in the font of baptism, when she converted two of her brothers, and several other relatives, as much by her example as by the invincible arguments which she used against them. She persevered faithfully to the end. God by degrees disengaged the pious widow Candida from all human attachments. After the death of her husband and mother, who were her support and consolation, she lost her father, worthy, by his eminent virtues, to belong to this family of elect. She suffered greatly in 1657, when eight French mis-

sionaries who came to preach the gospel in China, fell into the hands of robbers, and were left on the high-way covered with wounds. Having received them into her house, she afforded them such efficacious remedies, that in three months they were restored to health, and able to accomplish the end for which they had left Europe.

The desire of contributing to the progress of the faith, caused her to undertake many long and painful journeys. In one province, seeing the church very small, and badly situated, she caused one to be erected on a most magnificent system. In the province of Hu-quam, she purchased the house of a mandarin to be converted into a church, and had another erected at a suitable distance. In Su Chuen she built two churches, and in another place she built one and established a missionary. It would be tedious to detail all the good she performed; but while the faith of Christ was thus progressing in China, a persecution was raised by the calumnies of a vile intriguer, whose idol was his money. The missionaries were arrested, some of them were imprisoned, and the rest conducted before the tribunals to be examined. Their patience, and that of the numerous neophytes, at length opened the eyes of the ministers who governed the kingdom during the minority of the new emperor, and the persecution was suspended. How many tears did not the sufferings of the fathers on this occasion cost our fervent christian! What did she not sacrifice during the six years it continued! When the missionaries were cited to the court, she sent one of her brothers with a great sum of money to provide them with necessaries on the road, and to purchase presents for their guards lest they might treat them with the cruelties generally exercised

on persons accused of a capital crime. She continued her charity towards them during their exile, and omitted nothing to obtain their establishment.

The miracles which accelerated it by manifesting the excellence of christianity, were perhaps procured by her prayers and mortifications. Each day she redoubled her zeal and fervour, and unceasingly animated the new christians to perseverance, giving them the books most necessary in the circumstances. On hearing that her son had been deprived of all his dignities for having built churches, and been so zealous for the propagation of the faith, she told him she envied his lot, and, like the mother of the Machabees, added, that he was so much the more dear to her, as he had been found worthy to suffer for the love of Jesus Christ. Soon after the christian faith being in a general assembly, declared not to contain any thing injurious to the state, the missionaries were recalled from exile, and honourably re-established in their respective churches, to the great joy of all, especially of the fervent christians of seventy villages in the vicinity of Xam Hai. These repaired thither to meet the fathers; they filled more than forty boats, and sailed up the great river Hoampu before them, with instruments of music, and gold and silken banners waving in the wind, on which was embroidered the holy name of Jesus.

But the pious widow experienced that the calm of peace is often more to be feared than the storms of persecution. Her son's devotion grew cold by degrees, and she saw him lose his zeal for the welfare of christianity. Though it disquieted her greatly, she entertained hopes of his amendment, as she perceived *he was still devout to the*

Blessed Virgin, and did not omit his usual prayers in her honour. About this time she received from Rome, as a tribute to her piety, some beads of agate ornamented with filigrane, and clasped by a large medal of solid gold. "Father," said she to the missionary who presented it to her, "give these beads to my son Basil, without saying I have seen it; it will be a means of animating his devotion to the mother of God, and increasing his affection for you and your brethren." But, alas! one excess begets another; Basil, forgetting himself more and more, composed a work capable of scandalising the weak. Being informed of this, his pious mother, knowing he still respected her authority, obliged him to give up every copy of it, together with the plates destined to embellish it, which cost him a great sum, and sent them to the church to be burned to repair the scandal they might have occasioned. After this act she tried by every means to recal Basil to the way of salvation, and at length succeeded; for having invited him to the church of our Lady about half a league from the city, to hear mass and approach the sacraments, he returned perfectly changed, and made a general confession with the most lively regret, for not remaining faithful to his God. It was in this church that the women assembled to perform their pious exercises. Madam Hiu was the most assiduous in attending there; though advanced in years, neither rain, wind, snow, or other inconveniences prevented her visiting it.

Between the province of Nankin and Japan lies an island thirty miles in circumference, whither the missionaries had never yet penetrated, until the good widow prevailed with Father Le Faur, since deceased in the odour of sanctity, to visit it, furnishing him with all the expenses of

the voyage, even the presents for the governor and mandarins, and the sums necessary for purchasing a house, and establishing a church, which, in a short time, became the parent of six others.

As this fervent christian advanced in years, her zeal became more ardent, and her piety more tender. She assisted at Holy Mass with so much humility and respect, that she inspired all present with devotion. She approached the sacrament of penance as often as possible, accompanying the confession of her faults with a torrent of tears. She unfolded the state of her soul with the greatest candour, and penetrated with the sentiments proper for the grace of this sacrament. It seemed to her at the moment of absolution, that, like another Magdalen, at the foot of the cross, the blood of Jesus purified her soul from all its spots, and cleansed it from all its stains. She every night assembled her female servants in her apartment to pray, and instructed them in our holy faith. Her ingenious charity made her adopt the means of procuring baptism for the children of many pagans who were perceived in danger of death. Having gained the accoucheures, she caused them to be instructed in the manner of administering private baptism, and engaged them never to neglect it in pressing occasions. It would be impossible to say how many souls were thus indebted to her for their salvation.

Having learned that absolute want often caused mothers to abandon their children after their birth, she obtained permission to purchase a house for their reception, and procured them nurses. The viceroy contributed to this good work, as well as the lord Basil, her son, and several others, and Candida soon saw herself at the head of a numerous family of the little children of Jesus.

It is usual in China with those poor who have lost their sight, to assemble the people in the public places, and there exercise the wicked art of divination and fortune-telling to procure subsistence. Madam Hiu, to put an end to this wicked practice, lodged several of them in her own house, promised them a sufficient maintenance, and having caused them to be instructed in the principles of the christian religion, sent them through the streets to teach all those who were willing to hear them. How ingenious was she not in extending the kingdom of our divine Master! The sacred mysteries of his passion were the objects of her most profound veneration, and she honoured the Blessed Virgin with the most filial confidence. To the holy angels, particularly St. Michael, she was particularly devout; St. Joseph, the patron of the Chinese missions, St. Ignatius, St. Francis Xavier, St. Monica, and St. Ursula and her 11,000 sister martyrs, were especially dear to her. She had their images painted at Macao and Goa, by eminent artists, to ornament the church of our Lady, and the great church of Xam-Hai, and furnished a great part of the money necessary for procuring images of the twelve apostles, and four doctors of the church as large as life, with inscriptions containing the abridged life of these holy persons, for the instruction of the faithful.

According to the custom which the Jesuits established in China and elsewhere, Madam Hiu every month sent for the billets for herself and family, which they distributed. Each billet contained some sentences of scripture, or the holy fathers, with the name of a saint who was to be considered for the month, by the person to whom he had fallen, as his protector. Madam Hiu invoked with great confidence the saint who had

fallen to her, and endeavoured to imitate his virtues. How productive of good must not this practice be! It is on the respect which children owe their parents, that the Chinese have established the foundations of their government, persuaded that so long as children inviolably preserved a spirit of submission and obedience to those who have begotten them, the whole empire would be like a well-regulated family in which peace and good order prevail, and hence they omit no testimony of respect and affection towards them, particularly on the anniversary of their birth, which they solemnize with great rejoicings. Lord Basil acquitted himself of this duty to his good mother in the most signal manner, inviting all persons of distinction to share in his joy, and treating them most magnificently. On one of these occasions the emperor, to manifest to the holy widow the esteem in which he held her, (for true virtue invariably commands respect), sent her a most superb dress, and honoured her with the title of Chogin, which in our language means virtuous woman. To receive it politely, she wore it on her birth-day; but soon after, taking off the precious jewels with which it was covered, she employed them in clothing the poor of Christ, in adorning the altars, and in gaining souls to God. They could never prevail on her to assist at the balls and comedies with which they celebrated her birth, though all possible regard was paid to modesty on these occasions: she retired to her oratory to treat with God in holy prayer during the whole time.

While her wisdom procured her the esteem of the great, her charity obtained her the benedictions of the poor and necessitous. Her three brothers having squandered in a short time the rich inheri-

tance bequeathed to them by their father, this good sister provided for their wants, and assisted them with eagerness, rejoicing because indigence, she hoped, might recall them to the duties of christianity, from which, while in affluence they had unhappily strayed. Impatient in their well-merited fate, they sometimes complained that their wants were not abundantly enough supplied, but their prudent benefactress argued that she had other brethren in still greater distress, the poor of Christ, and that if nature bound her to the former, grace, which is a link much more holy, connected her with the latter. When her confessor solicited her to be more liberal towards her brothers, she said, "Father, permit me to say to you on this occasion, what you told me our Lord said formerly, 'Who are my brethren, but those who do the will of my Father, who is in heaven?' Are not the missionaries, who come from the extremities of the earth to announce Jesus Christ to us, my fathers and brethren? To them I willingly give the fruit of my labour; and I imagine I co-operate with them in the great work of the salvation of souls, when I help them to live. I cannot think how, with such slender resources, you can assist such a multitude of christians from whom you receive nothing, and also render the magistrates favourable to the exercise of your ministry. I envy and desire to share in the happiness of Martha and Mary, who received our Lord into their house, and served him with their hands, while he preached to Israel, as you do to China, the kingdom of God."

Having ornamented with magnificent paintings the great church of Xam Hai, in which assembled at the feasts of Christmas and Easter, from 8 to 9000 christians she resolved to visit it, though

none but men were permitted to enter. When all was ready, she gave notice to sixty ladies of her acquaintance, who, being carried in sedans, entered the church and performed their devotions. Her fervour on this occasion was worthy of the angels who witnessed it. In beholding the tablets of the mysteries of religion which she herself had procured, she imagined she traversed in spirit the Holy land where these mysteries were accomplished, and satisfied the ardent desire she had to visit that sacred place. She learned with delight that in this church, and in that of Sum Kiam, near 4000 persons were annually baptized, and in all China between 14 and 15000. She considered these new christians as her children, as they truly were in Christ, for they owed to her all the spiritual helps they received. It is certain that she founded with the fruit of her labours, and all she could spare from her patrimony, thirty churches in her own country, nine with houses for the missionaries in other provinces, and that there was scarcely a chapel, an oratory, a mission, or a congregation, which was not indebted to her for something.

Her zeal for the relief of the souls in Purgatory, equalled that for the conversion of infidels; she buried the dead, provided for the funerals of indigent christians, caused masses to be celebrated for their eternal repose, and when sending alms to the poor, demanded prayers for the relief of their deceased brethren in return. Perhaps it was to recompense her piety in this particular, that God permitted her to see in sleep her husband, and one of her children, lately deceased, who assured her of their salvation, through the great mercy of God: this incident increased her fervour. Her dreams and sleep were for her so

many communications with God. Sometimes she saw Jesus Christ extending his hands to her, as if to animate her to continue her pious benefactions; sometimes she saw the blessed Virgin, who, with her divine Son, promised her protection; or again, she beheld the souls of the little innocents, for whom she had procured the grace of baptism, and who seemed to thank her for the inestimable gift.

Enriched with so many good works, and ever occupied with the salutary thought of death, Madame Hiu herself disposed all that was necessary for her funeral, but her soul was as it should be, the principal object of her care. Having sent for one of the fathers, who having finished his mission, was about to leave Sum Kiam, she told him that she thought her death near. He not perceiving any danger, was about to depart, until she said, "Father, wait till Thursday, you can set out then." It was on this day she knew our Lord would call her to himself. After having recommended the great cause of christianity to her daughter-in-law, who inherited her own zeal, thanked her son Basil for his care of the temples of the Lord, conjured him if he loved her, and wished to see her one day in heaven, to persevere in piety, and be a father to the christians, and provided for the spiritual and temporal wants of her friends, she received the holy Viaticum and Extreme Unction with great piety. Accustomed every day to make the sacrifice of her life to God, she saw the moment of dissolution approach with joy, because it was to be the commencement of an eternal union with Him. Her death occurred on the 24th of October, the feast of the archangel Raphael, 1680, about mid-day, and with incredible consolation. It is said our Lord and his holy angels appeared inviting her to heaven.

Her family, and, in fact, the whole city was inconsolable for her loss ; the poor wept for her as their mother, the rich as their model, and the missionaries as a most efficient coadjutrice in the propagation of the faith.

Christians of the nineteenth century, cradled in the true Church, educated in the true faith, let us compare our lives with that of this generous neophyte; the contrast is as glorious for her as it is humiliating for us. And yet are *we* not infinitely more indebted to God than *she*, and at least why not serve him with equal fidelity? Are we christians at all? frightful question, but one which Bourdaloue put to the Christians of his day. "Are we, or are we not Christians?" said this great man. "If we are not, why affect the name? If we are, why not practise the works? It is a monstrous contradiction, an odious hypocrisy, to be a christian in belief and a pagan in practice."



PETER BACHELIER DE GENTES,

GENTLEMAN.

PETER BACHELIER DE GENTES was born at Rheims, the 17th of June 1611, of parents more estimable for their virtues than exalted rank, who entirely devoted themselves to the education of their children. Peter, their eldest son, was the object of their sweetest hopes; by his good dispositions he seemed from his cradle to be prevented by grace, and the beauty of his person lent to his innocence a new degree of interest. But, alas! how fragile is man! how soon does his heart become the prey of vanity and deceit! Peter had scarcely finished his studies, than he became by his sportive dispositions and agreeable turn of mind, the life and soul of all public assemblies, in which he appeared arrayed in all the gee-gaw ornaments of the day. However, he never lost his innocence, notwithstanding the inutility of his life, and the round of fashionable folly in which he spent his time. This is singular indeed, and could scarcely obtain credence if we were not assured of his devotion to the blessed Virgin. He had consecrated himself to her service in his infancy, and at the climax of his folly, he never spent a day without paying her the tribute of his love, and invoking her as his mother, and she never forsook him.

Always the prey of vanity, his capital sin, he determined to increase his store of those frivolous or real advantages which caused him to be sought after by the votaries of the world, by travelling

through the inland parts of France, and passing thence into Italy. Visiting, at Beyers, one of his relatives, whose virtues were celebrated by the whole country, but who had once been a woman of the world, Peter received together with a warm reception, a most eloquent, though mute advice from her, and saw in her holy and penitent life, what he himself should do to escape the gnawings of remorse. But the moment of grace was not come; and for the present he contented himself with admiring what he had not courage to imitate. On entering Rome, the capital of the christian world, he met a humiliation which ought to have been salutary to him. Mounted on a superb courser, he thought to catch every eye as he passed along; but the animal being frightened, threw him off into a heap of dirt from which he could scarcely rise. During the year he spent in Rome, he sought out every object that it presents interesting to strangers. Though still a worldling, his horror for every thing opposed to the virtue of purity, sometimes carried him beyond the limits of prudence. One day, while sauntering through one of the Roman gardens, a magnificent, but indelicate statue caught his eye, whereupon, instead of restraining his just indignation, he instantly seized the master-piece of art, and flung it into the Tiber.

On returning to Rheims in 1665, he still continued his usual course of folly and amusement. To what excesses was not a spirit so opposed to that of the gospel, capable of conducting him! But always admirable in his ways, the God of the Magdalens and Augustines, empoisoned with so many inquietudes his pleasures and diversions, that by degrees the illusion was dissipated, and Peter insensibly came to the resolution of renouncing them.

But prudence did not direct his measures towards conversion, and extremes are always to be feared; the Spirit of God never carries to excessive fervour. Peter spent eight months in almost perfect seclusion, never going out, except to the church, and devoting his days to meditation and rigorous examens. Who would not have expected his perfect change? but he carried things too far, and soon the world regained its ascendant, and the solitary plunged anew into the frightful whirlpool. A remedy still remained, and the "*God who wills not the death of a sinner*," employed it with success; a long and painful illness brought Peter to himself, and operated his entire conversion. Then much less occupied with his corporal pains than his spiritual miseries, he deplored bitterly his fatal delays, and the scandals he had given, and took a solid resolution which he never after belied.

His first act was a general confession, made with the sincerest regret. God tried him for a long time by interior pains, in which he found no consolation, save from his desire of atoning for his sins. Nothing was painful or humiliating in his eyes; the recollection of the unhappy days which he had sacrificed to human respect were incessantly present to his mind, he undertook to vanquish it in his turn, making an act of reparation before a cross, set up in one of the most public quarters of Rheims, and conjuring his companions in the broad way, whenever he met them, to forget his errors, and help him to obtain their pardon.

From his conversion till his death, he honoured with special devotion the penitents of the old and new covenant, and, like them, treated his body as a rebel to which he only wished to leave the capacity of suffering. His penances are more to

be admired than imitated. God is wonderful in his saints, he conducts some by extraordinary ways: of this number was Peter. He never eat till eight o'clock at night, and often his sole repast consisted of bread and water. His clothes were the same in excessive heats as in rigorous colds; his austerities were beyond number; nothing stifled his compunction, and his sorrow for his past conduct was so profound, that he was almost always bathed in tears.

Being a long time annoyed by thoughts of despair, he had recourse to God, and came off with victory, but not without fearing he had yielded partially to them, which greatly increased his pains. A person of merit having one day testified to him her desire of advancing in virtue by the most secure way, that of penance and mortification, added that she was ignorant of the conduct she should observe therein. "Hold yourself in readiness," said he, "to do the will of God. The first thing he requires, is a disposition to conform to his good pleasure; this will be followed by crosses, as the reward of your fidelity, and without your going out of the way to seek them. To be worthy of the cross, we must love sufferings; one cross attracts another, as the good use of one grace merits a second."

He afterwards avowed that God had drawn him, since his conversion, through a path strewed with crosses, that during fourteen years he had suffered such pains, that to support them he needed all the helps of grace, and, in fine, that he had never better understood the enormity of his sins, than by the justice God exercised upon his person: "It could only be," said he, "an essay of the pains of hell."

Peter cherished and served the poor as the

favourites of Heaven, and never omitted to unite spiritual succours with his corporal alms. There was not a poor family in the city of Rheims, which did not recognize him as its benefactor; he gave preference to the most miserable and unfortunate. One day that his sufferings confined him to bed, so that he was unable to visit the sick poor, he said to one of his friends who compassionated his pains, "You are too careful of a miserable sinner like me; nothing is omitted to procure my recovery, while my brethren the poor, particularly among the peasantry, are left a prey to hunger and distress, forsaken and neglected by all; what shall I say to God when he demands an account of the goods conferred on me, if I alleviate not the sufferings of His poor?" On hearing of the famine which then ravaged Lorraine, he would have gone in person to relieve the inhabitants, but for the bad state of his health. The recollection of the wants of the poor often made him rise from table almost as soon as he had begun his repast, with his eyes bathed in tears; he deprived himself in their behalf of the most necessary things, he only saw their sufferings, he only felt their evils. One day, carrying a poor invalid to the Hotel Dieu, he fell and was severely hurt, but rising promptly, he again took up his precious burden, and carried it to its destination. To visit the hospitals was his dearest occupation; but he flew to every spot where he could vent the holy fire of charity which burned within him. Thus he traversed the different villages of Champagne when desolated by the epidemic. In one of his charitable excursions, having learned that the inhabitants of a hamlet were dangerously ill, and deprived of all help, he went immediately to their relief; and it was with great difficulty he obtained entrance.

Not having eaten anything for three days, the poor creatures were in the last necessity, and scarcely able to answer him; but he procured them succours of every kind, and soon restored them. No good work was superior to his zeal and charity; he was often seen carrying off from the field of battle the wounded soldiers in whom there yet remained a breath of life, and bestowing on them the most tender cares. Self-love never lessened the merit of the good works of this pious man. His humility was so perfect, that he received insults as joyfully as worldlings accept praise. His most ardent desire was to be forgotten and despised. Since his conversion a single trait of self-love or human respect could not be discovered in his conduct. A greater detachment from creatures than he possessed, could scarcely be imagined. As he saw all in God, no event, however unforeseen, disturbed the peace of his soul. He every day advanced in the way of perfection, every day became more recollected, and increased in that interior spirit which is for those who possess it, an anticipation of the delights of heaven. In vain was he solicited to feasts and entertainments; he invariably refused to go. If it was insinuated that his presence would excite the guests to salutary reflections, he would say, "It is not at a table deliciously served we can expect to benefit souls. They can hardly be gained in the temples of the Lord, and you hope to effect it in the assemblies from whence penance and often temperance is totally banished. The inspired writer then deceives us when he says, "*it is better to go to a house of tears than to a house of joy.*" If you seek to be edified and instructed, go to the houses and places where God is spoken of, where penance and other virtues are exercised; for my part, I

could not resolve to go where I could not hope to edify any, and where, perhaps, I myself might be exposed to scandal."

Whatever did not tend to enkindle in his heart, or that of others, the bright flame of the love of God, was perfectly indifferent to him. He only desired to speak of God, or hear him spoken of. He was assiduous in attending, even several times in the day, at the instructions which were given in the different churches; if any one testified their surprise thereat, he said, "What! do you not take food several times in the day to preserve the health of the body? Is it easier to conserve that of the soul?" Guided by the same views, he frequently read the holy scripture on bended knees. Desirous to penetrate himself with the unction distilled by the inspired writings, and justly incensed against the fatal prejudice of the partisans of the world, that the present is an age in which the study of religion may be abandoned, he made their perusal his frequent occupation; hence his arguments were most convincing when he undertook its defence. His virtues gained him such an ascendant, that he was successful in enterprises which seemed most difficult, as that of arresting public amusements contrary to the purity of morals, and changing them into religious assemblies, in which the divine praises succeeded profane and indecent songs.

Though his life was spent in visiting the prisons and hospitals, it can still be termed a life of prayer. Besides the uninterrupted recollection which rather seemed to entertain than interrupt the course of his good works, he gave several hours of the day and night to prayer; in which moments, always too short for his fervour, his divine Master recompensed, with the magnificence

of a God, the fidelity of his servant. A single verse of the psalms sufficed generally to fill his mind with salutary thoughts, and his heart with the most ardent affections. A life so holy merited for him a happy death; the moment of recompense arrived, it was announced by a painful illness. He at once received the sacrament of penance; but, like the centurion, esteeming himself unworthy that our Lord should visit his house, he attended at the church, notwithstanding his extreme weakness, to receive the holy viaticum. After a long and fervent thanksgiving, he returned home, and during the eight days he survived, he seemed to be no longer of the world. A few minutes before he expired, one of his friends having intimated to him that the current day was the feast of St. Monica, and that the benediction of the holy sacrament was about to take place in the Augustinian chapel, he said, "I shall try to be there in spirit, and I hope in the goodness of God, and the prayers of those who are present, I shall receive part of the graces attached to this holy rite," and almost immediately he expired, 4th May, 1672, aged 61 years. His death was considered a real calamity. May my soul *die the death of the just.*

A PRAYER TO THE B. V. MARY.

O Holy Virgin, you are my good mother, and by excellence, the mother of pure love. You have obtained for me many graces during the course of my life; be pleased to obtain one favour more which will crown all the rest, that is, to love my God; to love *Him* ardently, to love *Him* purely, to love *Him* constantly as long as I shall remain on earth, that I may have the happiness to love *Him* eternally with you in heaven. Amen.

GEORGE THROCKMORTON,

GENTLEMAN.

GEORGE Throckmorton was born 18th April, 1670, in Herefordshire, of an ancient noble family. Endowed with those qualities of body and mind, which can render a person agreeable to the world, he hastened to open his heart to enjoyment, and swallow down with avidity the empoisoned cup of pleasure. Intoxicated with its deceitful sweets, he endeavoured to gratify his passions, not reflecting on the struggles it would afterwards cost him to restrain their violence.

Wishing to preserve him from the dangers to which his faith and morals were exposed in his own country, his parents sent him to one of those respectable colleges in France, where he should be furnished with abundant means of overcoming his vicious inclinations. Such was the object of his pious preceptors; but he corresponded badly with their intentions; he insensibly let himself be carried away by his natural vivacity and passion for pleasure, and became light, inconstant, an enemy of labour, and averse to application. His high birth and advantages, mental and corporal, rendered him vain, presumptuous, and indocile.

With such dispositions what could he acquire at college, save a slight tincture of the belles lettres, and a superficial knowledge of religion?

This even was the fruit of a servile fear of his masters, a forced obedience to his mother, or a vain fear to pass for a man totally unlearned. After some years he left college, and with such a conceit of his learning, that he supposed himself above all instruction, and capable of being his own master. He was delighted to regain his long desired liberty, and applied himself so ardently to become a man of fashion, that he but too happily succeeded in the frivolous study. Dancing, the sword exercise, and the other academic sciences were his delight, and he soon attained perfection in them. The most distinguished assemblies, balls, plays, operas, the chase, the card-table, became his delight and constant occupation. Sensual in the choice of viands, magnificent in dress, vain in equipage, he endeavoured to supersede in elegance the young nobility. He left in all places through which he passed, the reputation of his ridiculous vanity, particularly at Paris and London, where he most desired to make a figure, and to satisfy more perfectly his criminal passions. Always in movement from one of these metropolis's to the other, he obtained the character of the most refined and accomplished gentleman in every respect. He flattered himself that this general suffrage would advance his fortune, which, as being a younger son, did not correspond with his ambition; he was artful enough to avoid what might oppose his projects, and shunned all inferior society. The young worldling lived till his 27th year, forgetting, nay, flying from the thought of an omnipotent God; he feared reflection, and sought to drown it in gay circles and festive entertainments. If he was obliged to visit his friends in the country, although he met there a variety of amusements,

he felt quiet gloomy and dissatisfied, and tasted no pleasure until the moment his passions furnished some pretext to return to the city: he was *there* as in his element.

Amid these wanderings he remained firm in the true faith, Divine Providence did not suffer him to perish in the violent storms to which he exposed himself, thus preserving the foundation of the edifice of christian perfection, which he was afterwards to raise. But alas! what a faith was that of young Throckmorton in these days of darkness! a faith without life, without works, without merits. He went from time to time to the divine offices, but as to a profane assembly to see and be seen—not to appease the divine majesty, but to satisfy his pride and curiosity, and to provoke the divine wrath by lightness and disrespect. The cry of conscience led him to the sacred tribunal of penance, but it was generally for custom's sake, and never followed by any generous exertion; it would require too great a sacrifice to cease to serve the world, and to renounce his passion for its esteem and admiration. His conduct greatly afflicted his pious family, his sisters were inconsolable to see a dear brother follow so dangerous a course, and spared neither tears, nor prayers, nor exhortations, to lead him to his duty.

But *all*, reunited with their edifying example, was lost upon him; their hope now rested in humble petitions to the throne of grace, in which they were seconded by some pious friends, and to the efficacy of which may be ascribed his conversion. But by what immediate cause was this change operated? In his disorders he deferred his entire conversion under the rash presumption that nothing more was necessary than to receive absolution from time to time, after a cursory

examen and a few passing acts of contrition read in some prayer-book, before he presented himself to the priest; and then the priest he selected was he who asked him fewest questions, who prescribed him easiest remedies, and who imposed the lightest penance. As to those clergymen, who, wise and prudent in their ministry, fear to "give what is holy to dogs," to present impure souls with holy things, men who require works before they believe promises often belied—*these* he avoided as fanatics, as persons who made the road to heaven too difficult for folk of his age and quality.

A conversation with one of his sisters was the first step to his conversion. Tired in pursuing the way which leads to death, pursued by the remorse of his conscience, he told her one day, he would soon go to confession to unburden his conscience of a heavy load, the weight of which he could no longer bear. This promise reanimated her expiring hope; but the delay he put to its execution lessened her joy. He said, he would leave England to reform his conduct, but that he was resolved to figure once more at the court in Fontainebleau, with his magnificent equipage and splendid train. Alarmed at such a resolution, this sister represented to him the danger of delaying in such a state, adding, that it was presumptuous to expose the good desires with which he was now inspired, to such strong temptations as those he was sure of meeting on a theatre as dangerous as it was brilliant. But his vanity rendered her remonstrances vain; he went to France, leaving her in grief to expect his return. A sinner who thus sported with divine mercy merited chastisement; he met his fate. One day that he expected to join the Dauphin in the chase,

his horse became so furious that it was impossible to govern him. The animal ran off with him towards the railing of the chateau; the spectators expected every moment to see both perish, but the rider was only thrown off and wounded, but not mortally. Who would not have recognised here the protection of the Most High, but our young gentleman scarcely paid any attention to it. After carelessly avowing he was rescued by God, he went home, receiving the compliments of his friends, who nourished his puerile vanity by saying, they wondered how he escaped so great a danger. But this was not the only warning he received from Heaven. When the camp was before Compiègne, and the glory of the world displayed there in all its brilliancy, in a fit of intoxication he formed the resolution of crossing on horseback a very deep pool. The animal resisted all his efforts to make him enter the water; in vain did he apply the spur, he remained immovable at the brink, until his domestics, apprised of his frenzy, reached the spot, and having caused him to dismount, brought him home and carried him to bed, until he recovered the use of reason by a sound sleep. Strange ingratitude! this event made less impression on him than the preceding—he was then at the summit of his folly.

From Fontainebleau he returned to Paris, where he met his pious sister, who expressed to him her anguish on the dangers which he ran, and conjured him no longer to brave the divine mercy. He seemed shaken anew, and promised a change of life, but which he only beheld at a more distant period. Nevertheless, he made some steps towards an amendment, but they were insufficient; he persisted in believing it would cost him little to make his peace with heaven. His sister zealously com-

bated his error, that it was only necessary to confess his sins, and resolve to avoid great crimes, and proved to him he should satisfy for past sins by penance, and adopt measures to prevent relapses. The young worldling, on the contrary, said that in avoiding mortal sin, as he was resolved to do, he could continue his amusements. He consented to renounce all that appeared criminal to him in a worldly life, but not to abandon what it had of vain and agreeable. She opposed his criminal reserve; he obstinately resisted her reasoning; sometimes he warmly said, she pushed matters too far, and would only render him scrupulous. But her excellent advice, the good books she put in his hands, the secret conviction that he defended a bad cause, incessantly pursued him. Still he yielded not *entirely* to grace, till several months after his confession. He avoided great crimes, and tried to persuade himself he was out of danger, but in vain; a secret voice refuted all the arguments by which he wished to calm his terrors. In these dispositions he returned to England, where God permitted he should meet some pious persons who were as instructed of his irresolution as of his former extravagance; these resolved to second divine grace as much as possible in the total conquest of his half-vanquished soul. They represented to him all the truths which had hitherto impressed him, argued his errors with charity and zeal, and prayed so fervently for him, that he felt now so convinced of the necessity of penance and mortification in order to a christian life, that he laid down his arms, and sincerely returned to God. He took for his rule these two maxims of St. Gregory, that it is necessary to cure contraries by contraries, and to punish the indulgence of unlawful

pleasures by the privation of permitted ones, and conformed to them so exactly, that he was astonished afterwards how his body and soul could bear such violence as he imposed on them.

Indeed, his situation at home was particularly embarrassing, he could neither procure place nor leisure to meditate on the truths of religion, nor have access to a confessor who would guide him by his salutary advice. The more earnestly he desired these means of salvation, the more difficulty he found in attaining them. The friendship of his relations, the visits of his friends, deprived him of the succours necessary for one newly converted. Often, after having been annoyed during the day by their attentions, from which he could not withdraw, he spent the night in performing the pious exercises he had imposed upon himself, or he could not taste repose so long as they remained incomplete. Penetrated with a fear of the divine judgments, struck with the recollection of the punishments merited by his sins, tortured by the fear of relapse, it is impossible to describe the sacrifices he made, the violence he did himself to subdue his passions, and satisfy divine justice. A courageous, but inexperienced soldier, he attacked his enemies with fury, not knowing how to serve himself of his arms. Continual lectures made so strong an impression on him, that he wished to practise all, to embrace each advice that he received, and which to him seemed applicable to his evils. This disposition, joined to the excessive fears which his imagination inspired, so disordered him, that he delivered himself to many indiscreet practices, and thereby injured his health.

A spitting of blood came on, which alarmed his relations, they despaired of his life; his state

became so languishing, that all his friends could supply, or his physicians effect, were insufficient to his cure. Not knowing the real causes of his evil, they could not remedy it. The innocent diversion in which they would have him share, and the remedies prescribed by the physicians, increased his pain, since they deprived him of an opportunity of wholly delivering himself to penance. After a long time thus spent, persuaded that a journey to France would free him from all restraint, in point of mortification, he endeavoured to procure the consent of his friends; but they would not hear of it. They represented to him that he carried things to extremity, that an ordinary penance sufficed, for he had only acted like many young persons of his age and quality.

This reasoning tormented him more, he feared by listening to it that he might insensibly lose the horror of sin, and he felt annoyed to see them so badly instructed in the necessity of penance. As his malady increased, they were constrained to let him go, hoping that the change of air would effect his recovery; but his only object was the cure of his soul.

At first he intended to go to Montpellier, but finding himself better at Paris, he there fixed his residence. He had many other motives for doing so; his friendship for his sister Anne, who had taken such part in his conversion, the solemnity with which religion was carried on in the capital, as well as the desire of doing public penance where he had given public scandal. Providence no doubt wished to give us in his person a perfect model of a sincere conversion, particularly in favour of those young people who, sent from the provinces to the capital to finish their education, often

become the victims of the world and its follies for time and eternity.

The fruits of penance being according to the scripture and holy fathers, prayer, fasting, and alms, they were most evident in George Throckmorton. As all things are granted to prayer, as it is the key of heaven, and the shortest way to obtain all favours from God, our generous penitent never thought he devoted sufficient time to it. In order to dispose himself for its better performance, he not only denied himself frivolous discourses, useless visits, and innocent amusements, but he filled every leisure moment by spiritual reading, particularly the Holy Scriptures; thus he freed himself from many distractions which make the torment of christians. If he was sometimes troubled by them, he only made use of them to practise patience and humility. If deprived of the divine sweetnesses with which his soul generally overflowed, and that God seemed deaf to his prayer, he was not discouraged, but redoubled his pious ardour and importunity, acknowledging himself unworthy of even appearing before God.

Unlike some who go to prayer to seek the consolations of God, rather than the God of consolation, he was indifferent whether he was comforted or rejected, the will of God, he knew, was the only solid food of his soul. He detested the pride of those devotees, who seek always to be admitted to the cabinet of the prince; he considered it a great honour to be admitted as a poor beggar into his master's presence. It is true, he was often heartily welcomed, but never did he imagine himself worthy the divine favour.

No person could behave more edifyingly in the church than our pious penitent, it was quite

enough to behold him praying to desire his sentiments. His recollection and fervour were a continual reproach to those who seemed to enter the holy place only to outrage *Him, who with so much love and mercy resides therein*, and an affecting lesson for those who there feel cold and indifferent.

While in England, being deprived in consequence of the change of religion of the holy Sacrifice, and the offices of the church, he endeavoured to make up for it by particular devotions, but these he found not so advantageous to his soul, perhaps from a servile attachment to them, or a too great confidence in his own exertions, which greatly retarded his progress in perfection. In France he got rid of this hinderance; he united there with all the faithful, flattering himself that their fervour would compensate for his indifference. He daily recited part of the canonical office, honoured all places of devotion, particularly his parish church, and never embraced particular devotions, until he had fulfilled essential duties. He frequented the different churches on their peculiar feasts, to share in the fruits of these holy solemnities: in other moments free from works of charity, he retired to his chamber, banished all terrestrial thoughts, and nourished his soul with pious reading, or meditation on holy things.

By this continual application to God, his mind was seldom turned away from him. His heart was entirely devoted to the will of this Supreme Being, he submitted to it invariably as the rule of all holiness; his thoughts, words, and actions were squared by it, so that the most troublesome events or accidents could not disturb his peace.

It was by fasting and alms his soul was enabled thus to unite itself so closely to God in holy prayer; but how shall we detail the perfection

with which he practised the former! Modern Christians would no doubt condemn his excessive rigours, for we fear to approve in others what we know censures our own conduct; however, let us hazard the detail of them. The mind of our young Englishman, being deeply impressed with this of the apostle, a true penitent should render his members, which have been enslaved to sin, the instruments of penance, he not only interdicted his senses what was sinful or dangerous, but even those things which were lawful. He closed his eyes to the curiosities of nature and art, his ears to agreeable conversation, interesting accounts, news, and the like. If he heard of great events in church or state, which struck the world with amaze and turned men from serious reflection, he adored the decrees of Providence, and entered into its sacred designs. He refused his taste all that could flatter it, and punished it by the use of the most insipid meats. He never took food but as a remedy, and adroitly infused therein some secret bitter; thus he obtained over this sense a complete victory, so that he could put it to the extraordinary trials of some eminent saints. He mortified his smell by frequenting prisons and hospitals, and serving the poor in their wretched and often noisome habitations; in fine, all that afflicted nature was his delight, and he therein sought consolation. He accustomed himself to extreme heats and rigorous cold, to watchings and fatigues of all species. His confessor's interposition was necessary in order to moderate his excess. His numerous infirmities, occasioned perhaps by some indiscretion in the commencement of his conversion, contributed to the perfection of his sacrifice; he reckoned his pains and maladies more valuable than all voluntary privations; persuaded that the

choice of God should be preferred to ours. He was far from thinking that he adequately satisfied divine justice, and he was equally remote from esteeming exterior penance unaccompanied by the mortification of the passions and inclinations, the powers, and whole interior man. Determined to regulate this, he scrupulously watched over the movements of his heart to repress pride, vanity, a desire of being distinguished, secret preference of himself, self-love, humour, sadness, curiosity, chagrin, inconstancy, too great ardour for good works, attachment to his own opinion, an inclination to censure others, which so often transforms many austere devotees into true Pharisees.

He so happily succeeded in surmounting every irregular movement, that soon his sweetness, humility, cheerfulness, and charity, charmed all. Modest and affable, he rendered devotion agreeable to those who were most prevented against it. There was none of that acrid humour, wild impetuosity, too human affection, or weak inconstancy, which so often discredits devotion, to be discovered in him; on the contrary, he suffered all from others without ever giving them cause of chagrin or discontent. Whatever he suffered he had always the same cheerful countenance, unlike many, who mortify others while they are mortified themselves. If he fasted, he was cheerful; if tempted, he was resigned; if his regular duties were intruded upon, if he could not do what he had determined, he freely accepted and suffered all. If surprised in a fault, (for who, while clothed with human nature, is exempt from them?) he instantly rose, not dejected like many who cannot bear to see themselves imperfect, but with sorrow for his sins, and confidence in the divine grace,

he resolved to walk more cautiously in future. Thus his faults contributed to his sanctification.

George loved the poor ; not content with being their friend, he made himself their servant, considering it a great honour. To relieve them more bountifully, he retrenched all superfluity in clothing, &c. The time that was not spent in prayer, was spent in visiting them. While he lived at the house of the Christian Doctrine at Paris, he regularly visited the prisons with one of the fathers, opening, by his gifts, the hearts of the unfortunate inmates, that they might be disposed to the more excellent one of the word of God.

He was accustomed to lend money to poor families, whether to spare them the shame of begging, or to encourage them to industry, or to preserve himself from that secret vanity which a gratuitous liberality often creates in the heart. But these loans were generally a pure gift ; all that was due to him in this way, (and the sum was considerable), he forgave when dying, hoping that his debts would be forgiven in heaven. He charged a pious person to seek out the greatest objects of charity, then he visited and relieved them, and it would be hard to describe the occasions of abnegation he met in these visits. His manners towards the poor were most kind, so that they produced more good in them than all the relief he bestowed. Their spiritual wants claimed the greatest share of his attention ; his custom was to entertain them with pious discourse, to give them good advice, and to prevail on them to pray with him for christian patience. His love for them was 'strong as death,' since he required to be interred among them, that, as he said, he might appear before *the bar* in company with his advocates, and thus gain his cause. Rendering

his penance so complete, he approached frequently, and with as much respect as love, to the Holy Communion, gathering abundantly the sacred fruits of this sacred banquet, which were for him a great spirit of prayer, zeal for penance and mortification, and love of the poor.

After having thus lived three years and a half, he was seized with a dangerous illness which soon announced itself mortal. He was not surprised nor alarmed, for a long time he had regarded each day as his last; in the morning he did not flatter himself to live till night, nor in the night did he promise himself to live till morning. Having quitted all by voluntary privations, he had no sacrifice to make. He edified all by his patience and obedience; he every day recited the divine office till the eve of his death, and continued his ordinary lectures. He sometimes regretted not feeling in his devotions that vivacity and great light which he used in health, but the privation only humbled him in his own eyes. Still the divine Spouse treated him with predilection; he experienced no fears, enjoyed the use of his faculties till his last moments, and received the Holy Sacraments with great devotion. Towards his end, his union with God appeared so perfect, that a person who attended him perceived there was no need of suggesting to him acts of devotion. One day he told them only to join him in prayer, which he had no sooner finished, than he rendered his soul into the hands of his Creator, leaving all convinced that God never rejects a true penitent, or despises an humble and contrite heart. To Him be glory, and the empire of all things, for ever and ever. Amen.

LIFE OF THE GOOD HENRY,

THE PIOUS SHOEMAKER.

Henry Michael Buche, commonly called the *Good Henry*, was born towards the close of the sixteenth century, in the little village of Erlon in the duchy of Luxembourg. His parents were poor illiterate persons who lived by the labour of their hands; but they were good christians, and not being able to give their son an education, they strove to instruct him in the principles of religion, and to form his heart to virtue.

Docile to their advice, Henry soon distinguished himself for piety. He had an excellent judgment, and the best dispositions. He was apprenticed very young to a shoemaker, whom his parents chose because of his reputation for honesty and sobriety. The little apprentice zealously applied to learn his trade; he was never later than the hour prescribed, listened with attention to observations made him, and obeyed his master so promptly and willingly, that he soon endeared himself to him and his acquaintance. He was never seen running through the streets, behaving imprudently, or quarreling with his fellow-apprentices like so many others. A lie never stained his lips, nor did an improper word drop from his mouth; the least trait of ill temper never escaped him. He had an extraordinary desire to be instructed perfectly in the duties of a christian, and the truths of holy faith. He seized every opportunity of attaining this; assisted at sermons, and attended catechism, being persuaded that if it be not given to all to be learned and erudite, at least all can and should be instructed in religion and morality.

Unlike youth in general, he paid great attention to what he heard, and endeavoured to retain it. This application, combined with great vivacity of mind, soon rendered him so well versed in the christian doctrine, that his parents were lost in admiration. He loved to speak of good things, and did so with such unction that those who heard him were edified, and his great piety soon gained him the name of *Good Henry*, which he ever after retained.

By uniting piety with labour, he satisfied his obligations to God and man. When his apprenticeship was served and that he became a journeyman, far from degenerating from his first fervour, he made a greater progress in virtue under the special patronage of SS. Crispin and Crispinian, who had also professed the trade of shoemaking. The life of these great saints who sanctified themselves amidst their humble labours, made a strong impression on Henry; he could not sufficiently admire how men of exalted birth had quitted all, for an humble trade, to qualify themselves to labour more effectually for the salvation of souls.

Animated by their example, he burned with a desire to contribute to the sanctification of his brother artisans, and believing it conducive to his pious design, and useful to perfect himself in his trade, he travelled from city to city, as was then usually practised. Very different from those tradesmen who only quit their employers through inconstancy, or from a desire of giving free scope to their wretched inclinations, or to indulge indolence and independence, the *Good Henry*, before he set out, went to beg the divine benediction on his enterprise, and the divine aid to support him in the danger to which he would be exposed.

Fortified with the holy Eucharist, the bread of

the strong, and full of confidence in the Most High, he left Erlon and bent his course towards Luxembourg. He found occupation in the house of a very virtuous man, who was strongly attached to his religion. He soon found what a treasure he possessed in Henry, whose fervour was not lessened by the scandals that are so common in large cities. His day was admirably regulated; he rose early; offered all his actions and whole self to God, and made his meditation with great devotion. He then assisted at the holy Mass: it was a painful sacrifice when his business obliged him to relinquish this happiness. He afterwards went to his work, and was mild and affable towards his companions and careful to raise his heart to God from time to time by pious aspirations.

In the midst of his occupations he represented to himself Jesus, our divine Master, labouring at His trade, and the idea of a God exercising a poor handicraft, made him love his state, and prefer it to great riches. Remembering his holy models, Crispin and Crispinian, he felt a new attractive to labour for the conversion of persons of his state, as well as other artisans, who, from having been badly instructed in their holy religion, live forgetful of God, and enslaved to their passions.

Disorder was not then so prevalent. Of this, the success which crowned Henry's exertions is a convincing proof; nevertheless, there were then to be found idle, licentious, intemperate tradesmen, ignorant of their christian duties, and blasphemers of the Most High God. This opened a field for Henry's zeal; he went and reasoned with these scandalous sinners, represented to them how wicked they were in revolting against God, and how foolish in compromising their eternal happiness for their indulgence of some vicious habit, which rendered them unhappy even on earth. 20

His words were seldom ineffectual; he generally had the consolation of seeing them quit their disorders and acknowledge their wanderings. He particularly attached himself to young people, especially those of his own trade; he strove to gain their confidence by his amiable manners, and then by showing them their folly, withdrew them from the abyss. When he found them obstinate in wickedness, he implored in their behalf the intercession of the Blessed Virgin, and of SS. Crispin and Crispinian; then he went to seek them in their own houses or in the taverns, and spokè to them so forcibly, that he generally gained them to God.

In a short time no person was so much talked of at Luxembourg as the *Pious Shoemaker*. It was really amazing to see a poor artisan, without money, or influence, or learning, change the manners of a considerable portion of the community, and, moreover, that the good was not temporary, for all persevered in their pious resolutions. Henry adopted the most effectual measure for their perseverance; recommending them to be assiduous at sermons, and other public instructions, and in his private conversations, reminding them of what they had heard, explaining what they did not understand, obliging them to a frequent recurrence to the holy sacraments, the channels of divine grace, as well as to the flight of bad companions, and dangerous occasions, assiduity at prayer, and the reading of good books.

What he most insisted on was morning prayer, so generally neglected by trades-people, and he required it to be made *kneeling*, and with all possible recollection and fervour. He recommended the daily recital of the acts of faith, hope, and charity. It seemed impossible to him

that a christian could fall into sin, if he began the day by imploring the divine aid, and adoring the Author of his existence.

Having one day met a young mechanic, a scandalous sinner, whose depravity afflicted him greatly, he accosted him with great mildness, knowing the hatred he bore him, and which he often testified, because he had converted almost all his wicked companions; but the libertine pushed him away, refused to hear him, and menaced him with severe treatment. The servant of God, quite unmoved, overcame him by his patience, and spoke to him with such unction, that he became a sincere penitent.

The sinners he converted not only edified the city, but co-operated with their young apostle in converting others. They drew their former comrades to the service of God, by recounting to them the happiness they enjoyed in living like true christians. Their edifying conduct caused them to be preferred by the master-shoemakers, who relied on their integrity, knowing they would consider it a great crime to injure them in the least degree. When their day's work was ended, they generally assembled together, and recreated themselves innocently. In summer, they walked out sometimes to a chapel in town, or some neighbouring country church.—Henry was the life and soul of those assemblies; each one regarded him as a parent, and consulted him in his inquietude. He addressed all in words of peace and charity, which the sanctity of his life authorised.

It was not over his companions alone that Henry gained ascendancy. If he heard that a person cherished hatred and aversion for his neighbour, he visited him, and by representing to his view a God-man praying for his executioners,

generally reconciled him with his hated foe. Sometimes there was a jealousy for a place, or better wages given to another, or an altercation between the members of different trades; but Henry, after commending the affair to God, without any influence save that of virtue, conciliated and pacified all.

If it happened that a husband, by his misconduct, rendered his wife and family miserable and unhappy, or that a wicked son was the shame and reproach of his aged parents, Henry sought out these lost sheep, and withdrew them from their criminal habits.

In his time the heretics, who were very numerous in Germany, in the ardour of their zeal, endeavoured to make proselytes, and diffuse the poison of their errors in all the neighbouring countries. It was not alone among the students at the universities they sent their emissaries, but into the bosom of private families, and among uninstructed tradesmen. Many were indebted to Henry for the preservation of their faith: he fortified his young companions in their belief, and thus rendered unavailing against them all these efforts of hell.

It was really amazing to see a poor tradesman, like Henry, having no resource but his earnings, able to bestow such great alms, and so liberally assist the poor. There was not a day in which he did not inflict some privation on himself to relieve their necessities; nor did he forget their spiritual wants. He proposed to them all the motives furnished by religion, to make them bear their lot patiently, and thus render their sufferings the seed of eternal recompense. The sight of the poor so affected him, that he often gave them his clothes or his food, when he had nothing else.

He interested others for them, recommended their cause to his fellow-labourers, worked more diligently to be able to increase his alms, often visited them, particularly when sick, endeavouring to dispose them for a happy death.

Let it not be supposed, that to exercise these pious acts, Henry neglected the duties of his state. No, his piety was too enlightened to believe that any good works, howsoever excellent, would sanctify him at the sacrifice of his obligations in the profession to which God called him; and hence, it was only after performing these he applied to the relief of his neighbour.

For several years he continued his edifying course at Luxembourg. He visited the country of Messin also; but seeing himself honoured and esteemed in all places, and being animated too by the spirit of God, who had great designs on his zealous servant for the salvation of others, he determined to go to Paris. The scene presented to this pious artisan, on entering the capital, the centre of vice, was melancholy indeed; for his views entirely differed from those of most other tradesmen, who flock to Paris only to destroy their economy, their health, nay, their life itself. Henry walked with trembling through the scene of iniquity, and considering with horror the ravages there made by irreligion and immorality, felt an ardent desire to stem the torrent by every means in his power.

He placed himself in one of the workshops most famous for morality; unlike others, who seek only great wages, without heeding whether or not their salvation be endangered. He remained some time in obscurity, labouring diligently, and considering in silence and recollection the means best adapted to attain his end, then he connected himself, as at

Erlon, with some lads of his trade, and soon formed in Paris a little association similar to that at home.

What afflicted him most, and seemed to him the greatest evil among the Parisians, was the neglect of Mass, and public instructions by tradesmen on Sundays. The ordinances against public infringement of the Lord's day were then in vigour, and restrained men from its open violation. Nevertheless, mechanics did not sanctify it by the frequentation of the offices of the Church, and thereby deprived themselves of the graces and helps that are derived from them. But if Henry had lived till now, what would be his indignation? if he had seen the sabbath profaned, the law of God trampled under foot, what would be his sorrow? for it is no longer a simple negligence of religious duties in our tradesmen, it is an open revolt against the divine command: *Remember to keep holy the sabbath day.*" Sunday morning sees them still employed, and the sound of the church bell is drowned in the cry of avarice. "I must amass wealth," says the employer; "I must earn a livelihood," says the tradesman. Guilty master! of what use will your sacrilegious wealth be when you will be cited before the Lord? These riches, that fortune, may be lost to you in this world; but, though you be able to preserve it till death, it will seal your condemnation in eternity.

Wicked servant! unfortunate artisan! you work on the sabbath, because, you say, you must earn a subsistence. But hold, do you believe that your fellow-tradesmen who abstain from labour die of hunger? Do you think that he who ordained the seventh day to be kept holy would let those perish who comply with the command? Have you done all in your power to get work from a man who observes the precept of sanctifying the

Lord's day? I know that in these unhappy days tradesmen are often critically situated; but I know also that the third commandment expressly forbids labour on the sabbath without absolute necessity, which necessity you should submit to the decision of your pastor.

But how few act in this manner! almost all forget that they have a God to serve, or a soul to save. True a certain number are careful to hear Mass on Sundays and festivals; but how few with respect, devotion, or attention! How small is the number who assist at the parish Mass and exhortation—at vespers or at sermons! Ah, my God! how few serve *You*, who so well deserve to be served by all! After consecrating the first fruits of the sabbath to Satan, let us see if those nominal Catholics become sensible of their fault, or go to bewail it in the temple of the Lord. Alas! no! if they have ceased to remember they were christians, they have also forgotten they were husbands and fathers. It is in the public-house, the tap-room of which resounds with their boisterous exclamations, their wicked oaths, and indecent songs, you will be sure to find them. And, after this, can we wonder at the decay of morality? Oh! when once a person shakes off the yoke of religion, he abandons himself to every excess; if he avoid any vice, it is merely from want of inclination, and not from a principle of conscience.

What do we behold in the houses of these unfortunate tradesmen? A wife sighing over the misconduct of her husband, or, what is often the case, imitating his wicked example. No order, no economy, no resource against a casual want of employment or unforeseen accidents; offensive words, vexatious altercations, continual quarrels, disgrace the scene. When they do not go so far

as to refuse to speak to each other, they are strangers to peace; kind expressions, which would sweeten the cup of misfortune, never drop from their lips; all is anger, quarrelling, and strife.

The infant witnesses of this wickedness—children whom their mother never taught to pray, and who only hear from their father curses and maledictions, can neither be submissive to God, nor obedient to man. If, when they grow up, they are sent to schools, where they are religiously educated, if, while they are preparing for the first communion, they frequent instructions and catechism, these germs of salvation are choked by the first wicked impressions they received, as well as by the bad example they have still under their eyes. Natural propensities lead them into evil, and the company of other wicked children completes their ruin.

What a contrast does the life of the *Good Henry's* companions exhibit! They arose in the morning when all others were buried in sleep, and their first thoughts were of God. After dressing, they offered the day to Him, and implored His blessing on their labours. They assisted at Mass, if possible, and went to work with a holy alacrity and joy, because they knew it to be the will of God. Other tradesmen, on the contrary, quitted their beds with reluctance, rose out of temper, and said nothing to God. They saw in this new day but new pains and fatigues; they went to work by habit, and continued it till night; the day being spent, their wages were earned, but that is all. Not a good thought, nor a single elevation of heart to God had escaped them until they returned at night, the soul as empty as the body was fatigued, when, without offering a single prayer to the Most High, they cast themselves into the arms of sleep.

The *Good Henry* and his companions also laboured and took repose, as well as the irreligious tradesman; they underwent the same fatigue, and were employed almost in the same labours.— Whence then arose the great disparity between them? It is that the latter, sensible of the end for which they were created, viz., to serve God on earth, and to enjoy him in heaven, endeavoured to direct all their acts towards Him, whether trivial or important, and the intention sanctifies the action. They began the day by prayer, and returning at night to their humble habitation, where peace and tranquillity resided, blessed the Lord for his favours, taught their children to sanctify his name, craved pardon for the faults which, on examining, they found they had committed, purposed amendment for the next day, should they live to see it, and pronouncing the holy names of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, fell asleep, commending their souls into the hands of God. “*Sweet,*” says the scripture, “*is the repose of the laborious.*” In effect, while the body sleeps, the soul watches, expecting a new day to practise the same good works, and add to its store in eternity.

Thus their days flowed away in peace, and an ever-increasing serenity; thus they laboured to enrich their crown, if not with heroic deeds, at least with numberless small actions performed for God, and under his eyes, knowing that in eternity, for the smallest thing done for him, *He will be their exceeding great reward.* Hence it appears, that to be happy here, and blessed hereafter, nothing extraordinary is requisite. It is only necessary to fulfil the duties of one’s state, and comply with the obligations of religion. Henry was very remote from seeking a great reputation, if he had not been called to something extraor-

dinary, he would never have emerged from the obscurity in which his birth placed him, and which he prized above all the riches of the earth. To accomplish his designs on his humble servant, the Lord made use of the pious Baron de Renty.* No sooner did he know the *Good Henry*, than he fully appreciated his merit, and religion bursting the barrier which separated a great nobleman from an humble tradesman, a strict friendship was formed between them, cemented by the love of God, and zeal for the salvation of souls. The baron was amazed to find, in a man totally uneducated, such a fund of virtue and knowledge of divine things; but nothing edified him more than his profound humility and spirit of prayer. Thenceforward he treated him as a brother, made him the confidant of his designs, and the sharer in his good works. Henry felt a reciprocal esteem and affection for de Renty, but could not dissemble the confusion he felt by being honoured with the friendship of so noble a personage.

There was an hospital established in Paris, under the title of St. Gervasius, where it was customary to receive strangers for three successive nights. Here were to be found spendthrifts, soldiers, and persons of scandalous life—some who had been many years without confession, and others who had reached the age of maturity without a tincture of christian instruction.—Baron de Renty frequented this asylum, to administer to its wretched inmates spiritual and corporal aid; and Henry seeing the great fruits to be there gathered for heaven, visited it every night for the same laudable purpose. He addressed to them most moving exhortations, taught them to pray, and instructed them in all their religious duties

* See his life further on.

on the mornings of Sundays and festivals. He delighted in communicating at the chapel of this hospital. "I am happy," said he, "to see myself at the table of Jesus Christ, in the midst of the penitent and the poor."

In this asylum of human miseries, he often met obdurate and hardened sinners, and by the fervour of his zeal and charity, effected their conversion. If these had been debauchee children of family, or fugitive servants, he conducted them to their parents and masters, and obtained their pardon.

On Sundays he spent some time at the Hotel Dieu; gifted with particular graces to assist the sick and dying, the pious artisan performed the charitable act with unwearied zeal, accompanied by the young mechanics whom he had placed in the ways of God. These acquitted themselves of their pious work with such fervour and recollection, that the entire establishment was edified.

Baron de Renty, and some others distinguished for their piety, seeing that the *Good Henry* despoiled himself of all to relieve the poor, and wishing to give him more importance in the scale of society, procured him the rights of citizenship, and master-shoemaker. This last privilege qualified him to receive apprentices, and employ journeymen, and he soon had a considerable establishment. Full of affection for these youths, he formed them to virtue, as well as to their trade. They being already convinced of the value of such a master and model, participated in all his good works, and made it their glory to imitate him.

When he met tradesmen out of employment, he brought them home, provided them with clothes, money, and tools, and if they did not know their trade perfectly, he instructed them, and served them on every occasion. Several employers

imitated this admirable conduct, and thus drew a number of artisans from all the horrors of crime.

A vast field now opened itself for the zeal of Henry. Among the artisans of his day most detestable customs prevailed, under the name of associations. These unions were so much the more pernicious, as they hid themselves under the veil of apparent religion, and were formed with impunity. The most sacred dogmas of religion were turned into derision; the most holy ceremonies of the church ridiculed; and, after these abominable sports, the associates passed the rest of the Sundays in drunken orgies, concluding all with the most shameful debaucheries.

On hearing of these abominations, the servant of God felt animated to put an end to them, and pursued their extinction with as much zeal as prudence. Some overwise friends thought to turn him away from his enterprise, by the representation of its difficulties. "What," said they, "will you alone, and without wealth or influence, oppose yourself to that host of tradesmen dispersed throughout France and other kingdoms? You will spend your time in vain, and expose yourself to assassination from some of those immoral artisans."

Insensible to human considerations, Henry visited such of these miserable christians as dwelt at Paris, and after showing them their unhappy state, conjured them to abandon it. But almost all ridiculed his solicitations, and pushed on by the spirit of darkness, menaced him with destruction if he opposed their associations. Meantime, these disorders were submitted to the ecclesiastical superiors; and fourteen doctors in theology, after deliberating on the matter, pronounced the oaths and practices of these associations impious and superstitious. This censure took place in

September, 1645, but without effect. They still subsisted, though again condemned in 1646, and that Henry spread the sentence of condemnation as much as possible. It is true, that some among those wicked men acknowledged their errors, and tried to repair them by a more christian life ; but by far the greater number continued their impieties, proving by their obstinacy, how blind man is, when abandoned to his reprobate sense. To see illiterate tradesmen fancying themselves more learned than all the Sorbonne, was indeed lamentable. At length, the civil officers interfered, and condemned to banishment all the members of these illegal and wicked assemblies.

Henry then redoubled his exertions to induce them to submit—his zeal was proof against all difficulties ; the longest journeys and most painful courses were surmounted by his charity.—Obstinate in their wickedness, some of the trades heaped outrages upon him, insulted him, publicly railed at his piety, and endeavoured to blacken his credit, and obscure his reputation, but his resolution overcame all the representations of his friends, and efforts of his enemies. Nothing disturbed his interior peace ; ever supported by the credit of Baron Renty, and above all by the power of the Most High, he candidly confessed, that injuries and contradictions were as nothing in his eyes, provided he might effect the salvation of even one of those guilty wretches, and that he relied on God for the success of his enterprise.

His hopes were not deceived. A great number who had hitherto resisted the voice of conscience, the command of the civil law, and the exhortations of the *Good Henry*, were at length converted, and came to give him testimony of their repentance. He received them tenderly. Others followed this

example. In a short time, the most obdurate yielded, and instructed by the servant of God, evinced every disposition to repair past scandals. Soon these associations were not even to be heard of, and disappeared totally from the face of the kingdom.

This happy result merited for Henry the benedictions of all who wished well to religion. It was evident he was conducted by the Spirit of God, otherwise he would never have succeeded in a work of such magnitude and importance.

But it was not enough for Henry to rescue so many from wickedness, he endeavoured to make them persevere in virtue, associated them in his good works, led them to pious conferences, and exhorted them to love and mutually assist each other. To preserve them from danger on Sundays and Festivals, he conducted them to the church of the hospital, shared in their recreations, and rendered virtue amiable to them by his sweetness and condescension. If sick, he visited them, exhorted them to patience, and showed them the advantages derivable from sufferings. He also procured them all the relief he could; though he were obliged to borrow, he would not leave them without necessities.

Amidst all these good works, Henry believed himself a useless servant. He attributed all the honour of success to Baron de Renty and his fellow-tradesmen. He had selected from among his men, seven, who by their excellent dispositions seemed best fitted for his manner of life. These lived with him, eat at his table, and seemed to have with him but *one heart and one soul*. His establishment prospered beyond the most sanguine expectations; his reputation for uprightness and honesty procured him crowds of customers. He could have amassed wealth, but he loved better

to heap up heavenly treasures, by abundant alms to the poor. Some of his confreres at first envied him his great trade, but on perceiving how deserving he was of it, their sentiments were changed into a sense of respect and veneration. Such is the ascendancy of virtue, and the power of good example.

Henry was now about fifty years old. He had passed this half century in exercises of christian piety, and without taking into account the particular views of providence in his regard, might be proposed as a model to all tradesmen, from their apprenticeship to their settlement in business. For we cannot too often repeat it, to deprive men of bad will of all pretexts, and weak souls of every motive to discouragement, that it *is not great actions which make saints, but the practice of virtue, and the fulfilment of the duties of our state.* Few are called to heroic deeds; all are called to be saints. Hence we should not demand the great favours bestowed on some servants of God, but sanctify ourselves, if it be his will, in the holy obscurity of Mary and Joseph. By imitating them, a poor artisan, an humble mechanic in his shop, will taste the sweetness of the Lord, and eventually secure his eternal salvation.

We have found these reflections necessary, before we detail the last years of the *Good Henry*, for it was then he founded an institution, which was the admiration of his age, the edification of the faithful, and the ornament of the church, that of *The Brother Shoemakers*. For a long time he felt desirous to extend his little society, and to give it a rule which could perpetuate it. The pious example of his seven companions, the good they drew from their living in common, and to which others might be associated, increased this sentiment. The more earnestly he prayed to the

Lord to know his will, the more he felt impelled to this good work. Baron de Renty was equally concerned for the affair, and finally, on the feast of the Purification, 1645, to bring it to a conclusion, he conducted Henry and his associates to the house of the parish priest of St. Paul, who, with his vicar, and some other persons remarkable for their rank and piety, having examined, and being edified by the sentiments of the pious artisans, declared that their vocation to form themselves into a society came from on High, and that God would be honoured by it.

The good rector drew up their rules, which allied their daily labour with religious exercises. Thus commenced the society of *The Brother Shoemakers*, which soon spread throughout the kingdom, and even extended itself to Italy. The archbishop of Paris, John Francis de Gondi, considering the fruits they produced, confirmed the rules of the rector of St. Paul, contributed to the extension of the society, and named for its director an ecclesiastic of approved talent and virtue. The *Good Henry* was chosen its superior, and Baron de Renty protector. When he died, M. de Mesine, president of the parliament in Paris, was appointed in his place.

Thus arose in the midst of the world a religious institution, without the retreat, or vows, or habit of religion, and which consolidated itself by the spirit of charity and love of labour. The virtuous men who formed it, though free to withdraw when they pleased, persevered despite of the attacks of the devil and the world, and evinced as much zeal for the observance of their rules, as a fervent Carthusian in his cloister of the Chartreuse. Though unanimously chosen superior, Henry regarded himself as the servant of all. He performed

for them the lowest offices, preparing the repasts, sweeping the house, and finding nothing painful or abject. He was always the last in bed, and the first to rise, and he continued in prayer until the hour for waking the brothers, which was fixed at five o'clock. Prayer being made in common, all assisted at Mass, after which they applied to labour. At certain hours they took their meals and prayed, read the life of the saint of the day, and sung pious canticles, without interrupting their work. What a life of benediction! Their shop resembled the choir of a church, and their houses, like those of the first christians, were so many temples consecrated to the King of kings.

From this gratifying scene, let us transport ourselves to the workshops of these unhappy days. We cannot, it is true, expect to find in them the regularity of a religious congregation, the members being dispersed in different quarters of the city, cannot maintain that community of actions and pious exercises, which form the basis of the association of the *brother shoemakers*. But shall we find among them some traits of christianity? I enter a manufactory, I observe a number of artisans actively engaged, I listen, and hear one of them blaspheme wickedly. "What motive impels you," I say, "thus to profane the name of God?" "O nothing, 'tis only a habit," he replies. No wonder it should be a habit, since he commits it when the least thing goes wrong, when his tools are out of order, or his implements are mislaid.

If I lend an ear to the conversation of some of the younger tradesmen, their libertinism horrifies me. Here is an aged man who decries religion and its ministers; there another murmurs against

providence ; further on I am greeted by indecent songs, and shouts of laughter. I see the old scandalizing the young, and the young making it their glory to imitate the old. If it be a fast day, they imagine they are dispensed from the law because of their labour. No doubt some trades are too laborious to allow fasting or abstinence ; but the case should be submitted to the pastor, no tradesman should take the liberty of emancipating himself from the laws of the Church.

Such is the sad portrait of most of our work-shops. If a person ask them why they labour from morning till night, all will say, "To gain a livelihood." But if he say, "You have a soul to save," they look at him as if it were strange news to them, and say nothing. "O poor men," if he continue, "do you not fear eternal punishment?" "We fear nothing," they will reply, "but sickness, or want of employment." O man ! created to God's own image, will you thus forget your high destiny ? You are poor, but your poverty furnishes you with a new claim on the kingdom of heaven. Ah ! if you are still ignorant, hasten to be instructed ; quit your bad habits, practise the duties of your holy religion, and you will find a balm for your sorrows on earth, and a solace for your woes in heaven.

Such were the reflections which encouraged the *Brother Shoemakers* in their pious enterprise, and which engaged them to omit nothing that could insure its success. Every year they spent some days in retreat, and often held spiritual conferences. On Sundays and holidays they visited the hospitals, prisons, and sick poor. Peace and union were absolute among them ; an amiable serenity was painted on their countenances ; calumny, lying, and reproach were banished from

their lips, and charity governed their little establishment with unlimited sway.

Their life was so edifying that two years after their establishment, two master tailors, the most pious in Paris, resolved to found such another association for their trade. Having chosen seven young men for that purpose, they went to consult the *Good Henry*, the last day of carnival, (a time of riot and excess,) 1647, they found him at work with his fraternity, all singing together the praises of God, while the whole city was drowned in debauchery. Charmed with the pious scene, they communicated their design to Henry, who blessed God for it, and instantly went with them to consult the good parish priest of St. Paul. He congratulated them on their resolution, encouraged them to persevere, and bade Henry communicate his rule to them.

He united them with the shoemakers, they lived together and practised the same exercises, but to avoid all danger of confusion he formed them into a separate establishment after some time. They corresponded so faithfully with his cares, that they were soon as fervent as their predecessors. Who could enumerate the advantages derived to society from those pious associations? Morals purified, public sinners converted, men without religion become pious and devout, the weak supported, and the just rendered perseverant. These were not the only fruits they produced; they gave employment to the poorest tradesman, furnished them with necessaries, taught their orphans trades without a fee, helped others in their apprenticeship, succoured the old and infirm, and relieved such of their brethren as were deprived of resources.

Henry animated, directed, and governed all, yet still found time to work himself; he sought only the glory of God; his hope was fixed in Him. The divine omnipotence was his support in weakness, his riches in poverty, his consolation in suffering. Nothing alarmed him; difficulties seemed only to encourage him. On these occasions he used to say, "we must hope in God." When his designs were crossed he used to add, "I cannot conceive how persons for some little trouble abandon the Lord's work;" then he redoubled his exertions and they were crowned with success.

To this burning zeal for the interests of God, Henry united a fund of sweetness that nothing could embitter. The spirit of contention found in him a warm adversary. He sought to spread in all places harmony and peace, and was singularly fortunate in reconciling enemies as well as in leading sinners to God. These could not resist the spirit which spoke in him; he softened the most obdurate, and moved God by his prayers and penances to pity and convert the most wicked and licentious. Charging himself with their debts to the divine justice, he offered for them numberless acts of mortification and austerity. Among many traits of his ardent charity we cite the following:

A man, noted for his debaucheries and excesses, was a long time, but ineffectually, the object of Henry's zeal and charity. He besought him often to think of death; he set before his eyes the torments prepared for the impenitent, but these only rendered him more obdurate. One day, on which he had made a last but fruitless attempt, he returned home, and recommended to his brethren the conversion of this scandalous sinner, while he betook himself to move heaven in

his favour, praying with many sighs and tears. He was heard. The last words he spoke to the delinquent returned so forcibly to his mind, that he began to see his danger, and ran to find Henry. But what a sight did he witness! Henry bathed in tears and sighing over his iniquities at the foot of the cross. He could no longer resist; he throws himself on his knees before his pious friend—condemned his past follies—resolved on being converted—distributed all his goods to the poor—and took refuge himself in a monastery, where he closed his days in prayer and penance.

It was impossible that all those whom Henry led to virtue could be equally fervent, some for want of humility or christian vigilance committed such faults as greatly afflicted him. But however ungrateful the prodigal showed himself, Henry, like a good parent, sought him instead of abandoning him, then spoke to him privately, and re-proved him so mildly and tenderly, that the wanderer, unable to resist such kindness, was moved to regret and softened to repentance.

To his other virtues, Henry joined a singular devotion to the holy Virgin, under whose patronage he placed himself and his brethren, and an unbounded obedience to the laws of the church and to all superiors. With the utmost simplicity he manifested to his confessor the state of his soul, and considering him the representative of God, walked in the way he pointed out to him without murmur or disquiet. He spent his last years in the service of Him to whom he consecrated his first. Some unpleasant affairs regarding his establishment at Toulouse, obliging him to go thither, he travelled on foot nearly 200 leagues, without once complaining of fatigue. A new establishment at Soissons, obliged him to

make several journeys. Meantime his infirmities increased daily, and the Lord wishing to purify him still more, sent him an illness which lasted three years and a half. During the last six months his malady so increased, that together with some temporal embarrassments and pains of mind, he was reduced to a piteous state; but resignation to the will of God, and the hope of an eternal recompense supported him under all. The last few days he lived, a pure joy, a firm confidence and lively hope inundated him with delight; always humble, he made every effort to testify the pain he felt at the praises which a certain respectable visitor gave him for his good works; so that one of his brothers said to this gentleman, "Sir, what you say pains our father Henry." Some time after, his confessor having asked him if he desired anything, he replied: "No! all is God's, all belongs to God, and God is all." After receiving the viaticum with great devotion, they announced to him with much caution an inconvenience he should undergo. "Ah! my brothers," said he, "I submit to that and all things else."

During his agony, the pious brotherhood assembled round his bed to see him once more and receive his benediction. After looking at them tenderly for some time, the holy old man lifting his eyes to heaven, blessed them with a trembling hand, saying, "My dear brethren, be faithful; confide in God, he will bless his work."

Growing weaker, he took the blessed candle, kissed it respectfully, made acts of the tenderest charity, hope, and love, and peaceably slept in the Lord, 9th June, 1666. The sighs and tears of his brethren announced his happy death. His remains were interred in the cemetery of St. Gervasius, at Paris.

THE LIFE OF MARY E. TRICALET LE BŒUF.

Mary Elizabeth Tricalet was born at Besançon, on the visitation of the Blessed Virgin, 2nd July, 1690, of a distinguished family, and brought up in principles of piety and religion. Being surrounded by examples of virtue and her paternal home, she was convinced in good time that she ought to adopt every precaution to preserve the precious treasure of her baptismal innocence. Adorned with those natural graces which the world considers the most precious advantages of the sex, she rendered herself still more remarkable for her candour, modesty, docility, attention to prayer, devotion to the holy Virgin, and compassion for the poor. It gratified her parents very much to see this young plant flourish in the field of the Lord; their only fear was that the enemy of all good might snatch her from it; to preserve her from this misfortune, they sent her to be educated at the Benedictine monastery of Besançon. She there made her first communion with the most fervent piety, and in the first transports of love and gratitude, would willingly have bid the world an eternal farewell, to embrace the austerities of the cloister; but the moment of God had not yet arrived for her, and her parents had the unhappiness of witnessing what they so much feared—want of perseverance, for from the moment she returned from the convent, she showed but too plainly that we carry the treasure of grace in frail vessels.

Mary Elizabeth now arrived at that critical

time of life, when the world spreads its allurements most successfully, and was quite off her guard against its attacks, the danger of which she had not yet experienced. She received with delight the praises which were lavished on her talents—she listened with complacency to the syren voice which offered incense to her charms; self-love poisoned her heart, a tumultuous joy bewildered her, the goods of fortune seduced her, solitude had no longer any sweets for her; a love of gaudy show and flippery succeeded the simplicity and modesty of her early years; in fine, she almost forgot she was a christian. Such was the fatal state in which she lived, until the period of her marriage with Mr. Le Bœuf at the age of twenty-two years.

This gentleman was secretary to the king, and possessed great merit. It was feared in the commencement that disparity, in point of age and disposition, might be hurtful to the peace and union of the spouses; but Mary Elizabeth disappointed these anticipations. Her politeness and complaisance removed every thing that could prejudice harmony; but the cares of the household were to her a heavy burden, and a desire to please the world alone occupied her.

Extremely fond of dress, she made little account of the time and money she expended at her toilet. She was sought after in the most brilliant circles, because she lent herself to all the pleasures which constituted their life and soul, and filled up the few moments which they left at her disposal, by the perusal of pernicious novels which corrupt the heart, or make fatal impressions upon it.

Thus she walked on the brink of the precipice—the merciful hand of God alone prevented her falling therein, as she afterwards confessed. She

avoided every thing that could show her the danger of her state; her person was her idol; all that could flatter her taste was the object of her pursuit; the most exquisite and delicious meats were necessary for her sensuality. She could not suffer the appearance of contradiction, and however polite and complaisant abroad, she was haughty and imperious at home. Her passion for balls and plays was beyond bounds; in a word, she was during the first years of her marriage only the shadow of a christian.

She was yet lulled in her fatal lethargy when she brought forth a son. This child, the only fruit of her marriage, corresponded at first with the cares which were bestowed on him, and his qualities of mind and body inspired the most flattering expectations. Nothing was neglected that could advance him in devotion and learning; but the satisfaction he at first gave was changed into uneasiness and chagrin; the lightness of his character, and his relish for play, choked the good seed, which had not yet time to take root. The afflicted mother had recourse to menaces, but all were useless; in vain did she represent to him that the hopes of his family were founded on him, that it was necessary for him to seek an establishment suited to his fortune. The very mention of establishment annoyed him; travelling better suited his taste. He quitted his paternal home in consequence, and even without bidding his affectionate mother adieu. But this was not the only cup of bitterness with which the Lord decreed to drench a heart that for a long period did not belong to him. Madam le Bœuf flattered herself that the military state would fix her son's inconstancy, and for this purpose she procured him a considerable post; but the order and discipline

proper to that profession, were so much opposed to his love of idleness and dissipation, that he soon quitted it to deliver himself anew to his passion for roving. The consequence was, that having frustrated the hope of his friends, he was deprived of their possessions, which were very considerable.

It would seem that strokes so sensible should lead the mother to a sense of her obligations; but the breath of grace blew still too lightly, an impetuous wind was necessary to cast down the idol which received her worship. Time, which destroys all, soon dissipated the chagrin of this worldly woman—though tenderly she loved her son, she loved herself still more; and hence, she continued to swallow down the false pleasures of the world, and to have the same anxiety to please it. Always carried down the stream of voluptuous delight, she therein sought that consolation which was only to be found in God, and this merciful God was constrained to multiply her afflictions, in order to bring her back to herself.

The habitual illness of her husband was the first stroke she met; this obliged her to withdraw more or less from public companies—she was every day obliged to make some new sacrifice. However, she fully indemnified herself whenever a sign of convalescence appeared.

It is true that for his recovery she spared neither fatigue nor expense. The physicians having prescribed him the use of mineral waters, she accompanied him thither; but these were unavailing towards his re-establishment, and he soon after paid the last debt of nature.

His death greatly afflicted Mary Elizabeth, and the many embarrassing affairs in which it plunged

her, prolonged the duration of her sorrow. The solitude and retreat to which custom consigned her during the first year of her widowhood, were sufficient, one would think, to make her enter into herself; but her lethargy was still too profound, and no sooner was this period elapsed, than she resumed her former habits, and delivered herself more than ever to the pursuit of pleasure. Serious reflections, it is true, sometimes came to disturb her security; but she rejected and strove to banish them from her mind. Sometimes she listened to them, and said to herself, "How long will these pleasures last! How shall this sensual life end? Time destroys all—and death!!!..... Ah! cruel death! is it possible thou wilt snatch me from what I cherish so dearly?" Thus God enlightened, and even pressed her to return to him, to retrace the footsteps of her early youth, when she only lived for him; but, regardless of her own happiness, she continued to resist grace. At length, the precise time marked for her conversion arrived.—One day as she returned home from a splendid entertainment, on entering her chamber she chanced to cast her eyes on a crucifix which hung there, and the sight instantly reproached her with her worldly life. But the first impression was soon effaced, and the next day she ran with new ardour to a numerous assembly. Determined to give her passions unlimited indulgence, she removed the sight of every thing which could arouse remorse, and for this purpose even covered the crucifix which had agitated her the day before; happily for her the precaution was vain. The remorse of her conscience became so lively, and so continued, that in the end she felt, like St. Paul, all the danger of resisting longer the grace which called her. Suddenly she became

a new creature, resolved to quit all for Christ. The only pain she experienced, was of afflicting her relations by forsaking them, and yet this step was necessary to break the bonds which bound her to earth. She could wish to enter into a monastery; but she was not yet sufficiently confirmed in her resolutions to flatter herself that she might be able to persevere. In this state of mind, not having any person to whom she could unburthen herself, she had recourse to prayer, and as she had from her infancy a tender devotion to the Holy Virgin, she cast herself now into her arms, and prepared to make a pilgrimage to a place consecrated to her near Besancon, under the title of *Our Lady of Consolation*, to obtain through her intercession a knowledge of the will of God, and grace to follow it. The eve of her departure she was invited to a supper given by one of her family, and the combat she sustained in seeing herself among those whom she so much cherished, and whom she was now on the point of quitting for ever, would be difficult to express. More than once during the repast her sighs and tears were near betraying her secret; she remained victorious, nevertheless, and after returning home spent the rest of the night in prayer. The following day she made her confession, and received the Holy Communion at our Lady's above-named. In this propitious moment, as she watered the feet of her Lord with her tears, like another Magdalen, and promised him not to return any more to Besancon, but to go wherever he wished her to sacrifice herself to him. Dijon was the place indicated to her, and she arrived there in July, 1741.

Her first residence in this city was among the Sisters of St. Martha, a religious congregation,

where she had the happiness of knowing Father Naussin, a holy Jesuit, a director according to God's own heart. She opened unto him entirely the state of her soul, and testified her desire of quitting the world for the cloister, as the most certain means of fixing her inconstancy; but he advised her to enter as pensioner among the Dominicanesses of the same city. The prioress, and the community feared to receive into the house a person so full of the spirit and manners of the world, and above all to receive her waiting woman, with whose character they were quite unacquainted, but the charity and zeal of Father Naussin overcame all their repugnance, and Madame le Bœuf was admitted. The poverty of the apartment allotted her at first shocked her delicacy—she was yet a novice in the ways of penance, but a glance at her past conduct soon reconciled her to it, and she said to the prioress with a firm tone, "Indeed it is too convenient for a sinner." In these trying moments she said to herself, "Whatever it costs me I should save my soul. I am too weak to resist the maxims of the world, I should have abandoned it long ago. God has had great patience with me, I a thousand times merited hell, and yet this God of goodness has prepared me a sanctuary of peace, where the virtues of his faithful spouses will animate me to penance. The rest of my life shall be spent in loving him, serving him, and doing his will at each and every moment. I shall immolate to him the wretched remains of a heart entirely unworthy of his acceptance."

In these pious sentiments she besought her confessor to hasten her entrance among the Dominicanesses, and to defer, until then, the absolution of her general confession. "It seems to me," said

she, "that it is in that holy house the full pardon of my sins will be granted me ; besides, when I have made all my sacrifices, I may hope the Lord will give me holier dispositions and more perfect contrition. Her hope was not vain ; she had not passed many days in this pious asylum, when she experienced the most lively satisfaction. On entering, she went first to the choir to adore the Holy Sacrament, and there exclaimed with the prophet, " Lord, in the sight of thy infinite mercies I will enter into thy house and bless thy holy name : what shall I offer to thee that is worthy ? I have nothing but myself, O Lord ! behold, I sacrifice myself to thy love. If my sins discourage me, thy name, thy blood, thy cross, thy death, reanimate my confidence. I adore thy omnipotence ; but I admire and love thy infinite goodness in pardoning repentant sinners. I am an unclean sinner, purify me, I beseech thee, number me with thy most fervent adorers. Too long hast thou sought me, at length thou hast won my heart, I abandon myself wholly to thee, my only desire is to be faithful to thee on earth, and to dwell in thy holy house all the days of my life." Thus pouring out her soul before the Lord, her transports were so great, that they were even obliged to force her from the foot of the altar. From thence she was led to her chamber, where she cast herself at the feet of the mother prioress, beseeching her to take her in charge as a poor strayed sheep. " The burden is heavy, mother," said she, " but do not be discouraged, relax not your charitable cares until you have lodged me in the bosom of God ; use no ceremony or compliment with one whose vanity has deserved hell ; my only fear is, that you will spare me too much."

After taking up her new abode, Madame le

Bœuf found in her drawers a quantity of rouge ; she instantly gave it up to the prioress with the submission of a child. Perceiving that when the nuns visited her, they turned their eyes from a large chimney-glass which she had in her apartment, she covered it with a cloth, and soon after sold it for the benefit of the poor. She sacrificed also some rich tapestry, so that everything about her breathed penance and mortification. A little saloon in her chamber formed two little cabinets, one for her oratory, the other for her waiting maid's bed, a painting covered the walls of her room, some objects of devotion hung around it, but she ornamented it with her virtues, watered it with her tears, and filled it with the good odour of Jesus Christ.

The day she received absolution after her general confession, was the happiest of her life; she left the confessional bathed in tears; she communicated next day with such devotion, as edified the whole community, and passed several hours in making her thanksgiving. After dinner she visited the religious, and said, "I have found at length, ladies, the place of my repose ; Oh, how heavy is the yoke which the world imposes on its servants ! Bless with me the hand which drew me from it, and help me by your prayers to carry the yoke of Christ, the sweetness of which I already begin to taste."

One of the first dispositions which grace generated in her soul, was a profound sense of her nothingness, and the enormity of her sins. If she often styled herself a sinner, the persuasion that she was such was still more deeply rooted in her heart. Her air, her deportment, announced a soul overwhelmed by the weight of its faults ; despite of her progress in piety she saw in herself nothing

but poverty and misery—she became as anxious for reprimands, as she had thirsted after praise; for the rich attire to which she was accustomed, she substituted garments of the plainest quality—like all true penitents she tried to practise in a particular manner the virtues opposed to her favourite vices. In the world she used to command her servants most imperiously—in her retreat, grace metamorphosed her heart, as her waiting maid happily experienced. “I have always spoken haughtily to you,” said she, “now I shall command you nothing; I shall look to your charity and affection for the services I need; I shall even consider you my sister, and we shall eat at the same table.”

On the eves of great festivals she kissed the feet of this servant as well as those of the lay sisters in the community, to share in the humiliations of her God and Saviour. She considered herself the opprobrium of the house, and wishing to be of some utility, she resolved on petitioning to be received among the lay sisters, but first consulted those who by their piety and wisdom were most likely to discover the will of God in her regard. One of those was Abbe Tricalet, her brother, a priest and director of a seminary at Paris, a very worthy clergyman, and to her a great source of consolation. The letter she wrote to him on this occasion breathes such a spirit of humility, that we have no doubt it will be read with edification.

“Dijon, 12th July, 1758.

“Will that zeal which God, my dear brother, has given you for my salvation, induce you to do me a favour? It is to recommend me to God, during nine days successively at the holy sacrifice, and to say for my intention three Gloria

Patris and three Ave Marias, that God may make known whether the desire I have conceived of becoming a lay sister proceeds from him. I would not wish to be a choir sister, although they were willing to receive me as such, for I would not be able to fulfil all the duties of the rule, particularly the great office and matins which are said at midnight, and I would not wish to introduce a breach of regular observance in this holy community. I am desirous to know if it be the will of the Divine Pastor who has conducted me hither, that I should consecrate myself to him by indissoluble vows; then neither age nor infirmity could make me change, and it is very just, that I should give him my last hour, after, alas! giving the world my youth. I have not yet done any thing to testify to him my gratitude for drawing me from hell, and in taking the habit I would consecrate myself wholly to him. Ask him, dear brother, if such be his will—engage for this purpose the prayers of your pious friends. I wish you could commence the Novena on Saturday, which will be the 17th. I am quite pleased to hear you are so devout to St. Dominick, since I have the happiness of residing in one of his houses, and mean to die one of his children, for the manifestation of the power and mercy of God towards me, who am the weakest and most unworthy of all sinners.

“Yours affectionately in Christ,

“M. TRICALET LE BŒUF.”

“I have not been able,” said the Abbe, in his reply, dated 24th July, “to read your letter, my dear sister, without tears of joy. I have performed the Novena, and interested St. Joseph for you, for I have great confidence in him. I believe that your desire of being a nun comes from God, but I think he has only inspired it to try you like Abra-

ham, remain then in your present state ; such is the divine pleasure. But to participate in some degree in the sanctity and merit of a religious, I advise you to place yourself under the direction of your prioress, and obey her in every thing as the last of her daughters. Beg of her to give you a regulation for all the actions of the day, by this means you will practice obedience without having vowed it, you will no longer have any will of your own ; all will be stamped with the seal of God's good pleasure. Behold your path, dear sister. I send you the cincture of St. Dominick. I have cut off two little bits for myself. Give my best respects to the prioress, and pray for yours, &c. &c."

Madam le Bœuf instantly obeyed the injunctions of her brother, and attained that holy state of spiritual infancy recommended by Jesus Christ. All her words and actions were most edifying. She would have willingly declared all her sins publicly, to manifest the divine mercy and her own unworthiness. The least mark of esteem visibly annoyed her, and to restore serenity to her soul on these occasions, it was necessary to allow her to humble herself. She went very seldom to the parlour ; in conversation she was brief, even on religious subjects, for she feared that in speaking of virtue, favourable ideas might be conceived of her. "It would be a great pity," said she, "to allow any person to think well of me ; I could not permit them to labour under such a mistake."

On entering the convent she brought her portrait with her ; she would have burned it if she had not been prevented : it gave her great pain to see it preserved, but as obedience required it, she contented herself with getting a painter to clothe her in the picture with the religious habit, and to

make the features older, and to place in her hand a picture of the holy virgin. This likeness has been ever after preserved by the community.

Her faith equalled her humility; since her conversion it was the main spring of her conduct. She had God no less present at all times than if she beheld him with her eyes. This presence excited in her sentiments of adoration, modesty, recollection; at conversation, work, or recreation, she never left this blessed presence. Her faith was more manifest in her participation of the Holy Sacrament; she was not only humbled, but annihilated before the Lord on these occasions. She had great respect for the feasts, offices, and ceremonies of the Church, and offered continually prayers and good works for the exaltation of this good mother. "We receive so many favours from her," she would say, "from the cradle to the tomb, that we can never sufficiently pray that all nations may be subject to her, and that the light of her doctrine may be carried to the most distant climes." She fervently prepared herself for the jubilee granted to the faithful in 1745. In her first transports on this occasion, she said, "What a great mercy, O my God, that you have taught me how to avail myself of this indulgence! Alas! all my life I have been grossly ignorant of my christian duties." She purified herself anew by a confession made with the most lively sorrow, complied with the other conditions, passed the night before the communion in the greatest devotion, and she approached the holy table like the Cananean woman, "Too happy am I," said she, "if I can collect the crumbs which fall from the table of my divine Master."

The graces she received on this occasion were so great, that she seemed to be changed into a

new creature. Divine love elevated, ennobled, sanctified her smallest actions; it became the soul of her conduct, the motive of her renunciation, of vanity and self-will, and her stimulus to do on every occasion what she judged most perfect. "My God!" she exclaimed, "I languish with love; why cannot I die for having loved you too late?" Docile in the most perfect degree, she never testified any resistance; but when they obliged her to quit the foot of the altar, lest she might prejudice her health, her only desire was to spend her days and nights there, in repairing the outrages every day offered to this august sacrament.

For many years after her conversion, however ardent her love, she held herself at the feet of Jesus as another Magdalen; scarcely did she "touch the hem of his garment," she did not even approach often to the holy table; but ten years before her death she felt such a hunger after this divine food, that she obtained permission to communicate four or five times in the week. "I know and feel my extreme unworthiness," did she say, "nevertheless I shall go and receive my divine Master as often as I am permitted. The days on which I cannot receive him sacramentally, I shall unite myself to him by the bonds of faith and love. When the holy sacrament was exposed, as generally occurred on great festivals, she seemed no longer to be of the earth. Before the throne of the Lamb, "which is truly the place of sanctification," she gave free scope to her sighs and tears; hours flew away like moments. If any religious was prevented by her occupations from adoring the holy victim, at the hour prescribed Madam reckoned herself too happy in filling her place. She had a singular devotion too, to the

sacred heart of Jesus, she communicated every Friday in his honour, and after the spirit of the association, in which she inscribed herself, she entirely consecrated the first Fridays of the month to this holy devotion.

It is impossible to love God without loving our neighbour; hence Madam Le Bœuf evinced that ardent charity which characterises the true christian. Although naturally choleric, she had so far conquered herself since her conversion, that meekness seemed to repose on her lips; her tone, her air, her manner, were under the government of the most perfect charity. She shared in the afflictions of others, consoled them, encouraged them, and spoke to them with such unction of sufferings, that she induced them to love the cross. Her compassion was specially manifested towards the sick, and her charity in their regard triumphed over all the repugnances of nature. The lay-sisters were above all the objects of her solicitude; she took a singular pleasure in serving them. The whole community bear testimony to the cares she lavished on a certain person who, in addition to the infirmities of old age, had a most disgusting disease. She often led her to her apartment, tried to console her, washed her feet, and performed for her the most humiliating services. She loved and esteemed all the religious, but without manifesting to any of them a too human affection. She sometimes abstained from their company in recreation, (through humility), believing herself unworthy to associate with the spouses of Christ.

Her charity for the poor, even during her wanderings, was very great; it was that which drew upon her the graces she afterwards received. It is related that, while yet a worldling, a most mis-

erable object having asked her for alms, Madam gave him a considerable sum, and recommended herself to his prayers. After promising he would never forget her, before God, the poor creature said he had no friend on earth to assuage his misery, and that he was quite abandoned. To this she replied with great emotion, "Well, I cannot do much for you, but as long as I live, though I were at the other end of the world, I shall give you ten crowns a year." She kept her word, and this little sum was the fruit of the privations which she imposed on herself in a spirit of penance.

Little accustomed to labour while in the world, she recognized in her seclusion the obligation imposed on all the children of Adam, to occupy themselves usefully; hence she worked with great diligence, she sometimes made stockings for little children, which she caused to be distributed at Christmas in honour of the holy infancy of Jesus. "When I left the world," said she, "I thought time would hang heavily on my hands; I proposed to myself to cultivate flowers, and to procure me a thousand little amusements; but really now, that I taste the happiness of labouring for my salvation, it flies so rapidly, that scarcely have I sufficient to perform my most essential duties.

She sacrificed all for love of peace; she heaped benefits on those who injured her, and never spoke of them but in strains of eulogy: she regarded slander as an unworthy vice, and when she could not excuse the action, she excused the intention. She never spoke of the injustices she endured but when obliged, and then she said she merited these and even greater sufferings. She had such a spirit of prayer, that she passed several hours in this holy exercise without perceiving

them, and yet she complained of the little progress she made in this science. "My imagination is so liable to distraction," said she, "that I profit not of the precious time of prayer. This I attribute to my sins and great unworthiness; all my resource is to cast myself into the bosom of the Father of mercies, to render him a thousand thanks for the graces wherewith he has loaded me, and to offer him the merits of his divine Son to supply my darkness and my wants. I feel myself extremely weak despite of my desire to elevate myself, and I always remain at an immense distance from this sacred object." She never left meditation without new resolutions to overcome herself. "Let God retrench and destroy in me," said she, "let him humble and annihilate me, provided I have the happiness of seeing and possessing him, I am quite content. My penance should be continued, my tears should never cease to flow until I cease to live." Prayer was her support, and her only consolation in all the interior or exterior trials she endured.

In order to be able to make pilgrimages in honour of the Holy Virgin, without leaving her retreat, she caused a little oratory to be constructed in the upper room of the monastery, and placed therein a picture of this Blessed Queen; she named this place *Our Lady of Hearts*, whither she came every day to pour out her soul before God, and to ask of him, like another Monica, through the intercession of Mary, the conversion of her son. She still loved him tenderly notwithstanding his follies. "My son," wrote she to him, in sending him a picture of the Blessed Virgin, "behold your Mother, the Mother of mercy; wear it with devotion, and never omit to say every day the '*Hail Mary*' five times, to obtain grace to avoid the occasions of

sin." He received the letter with respect, and practised faithfully what she required. When he returned from Spain, he confessed that he supposed himself indebted to this image, and the prayers of his mother, for his safe preservation from many dangers. A priest, who for a long time served the monastery, was taken very ill; the community, greatly alarmed, had recourse to Madam Le Bœuf. "The physicians despair of our father," said they, "perhaps he has already expired." "No," replied she, calmly, "let us recur to prayer, let us go to Mary, our Mother, and you will see he will recover, for the manifestation of the divine power, and the honour of the Blessed Virgin." The effect soon followed, that very night the invalid was declared out of danger.

During the illness of the Dauphin, (as they term the eldest son of the king of France), in 1752, she made a vow in his name to the holy Virgin, and his recovery followed. She did the same for many others, but fearing the success which attended her supplications might nourish her self-love, she was only induced by the advice of her confessor to make use of the gift.

To the truly penitent she saw it was necessary to go to the source of the evil, and to cut it off at the root; hence she ever immolated herself, her passions and affections, always mindful of the sins of her youth she thought no penance sufficient to repair them. It was to supply her insufficiency in this respect that she obtained permission to make the following act:—

This 29th June, feast of SS. Peter and Paul, after receiving my God in his holy sacrament, I make him a total offering of myself, in the amiable Heart of Jesus, under the shadow of his protection in the adorable Sacrament of the Altar, with the hope of his

grace, under the protection of the holy Virgin, of St. Joseph, of the nine choirs of Angels, and of my Angel Guardian; I devote myself to him in life and death, as irrevocably consecrated to his love and blessed will. In union with my Saviour's sacrifice, whence mine alone derives its merit, I sacrifice my parents, friends, life and health, no longer wishing to live or die, but for God, the only love of my heart. I submit, in order to please him, to all the crosses and humiliations he shall send me, and to all those which I shall meet in the way of salvation. I renew my baptismal vows, with a thousand regrets for having violated them. I desire and implore a great confidence in my God. I fear nothing but to offend him. I say with all my heart an eternal fiat voluntas tua, and only ask the grace of final perseverance, which shall put me in possession of my God for ever.*

(Signed) M. E. TRICOLET LE BŒUF.

The heaviest cross of Madam Le Bœuf was the misconduct of her son. We before related her great desire of his conversion. The letters she wrote to him when in Spain, whither he retired to live with less restraint, were full of the most sage counsels and pressing exhortations. About this period she lost almost all her relations. In these sad moments she was on the point of sinking; but, in the spirit of sacrifice and abnegation to which she had habituated herself, she soon said, "All that God does is divinely ordained; the less consolation I shall have on earth, the more will this good Father give me of it in heaven." But the Lord wished to afflict her still more sensibly. Not one of those friends who died, though very rich, left her any property, fearing her son, on whom it would devolve, might

* Thy will be done.

abuse it. Always submissive, she said to God, "Lord, I accept for my son and myself all privation of temporal goods, provided you grant us the grace of possessing you eternally." But she was soon to receive the fruit of her prayers, for this son's conversion. Already she perceived by his answers to her letters, that God was moving his heart. A severe illness which attacked him, caused him to return to France. He arrived at Dijon in 1754, and was received by his mother with transports of affection. The crucifix, the sight of which had begun the work of her own conversion, was placed in his apartment, and nothing was omitted to induce him to embrace virtue. At length, touched with the wretched state of his soul, he resolved on returning to God, and atoning for his past disorders. With this view he made a retreat in the Jesuit's college, and ever after, till his death, which occurred in about eighteen months, resolutely walked in the ways of holy penance. The crucifix, before alluded to, was in his hands at his last moments, he embraced it with transports of love and contrition, exclaiming, "Lord, have pity on a contrite and humble heart which hopes in your mercy." He was quite pleased to die before his mother, knowing, as he said, that she would continue her prayers for him, to which he already ascribed his conversion.

Madam Le Bœuf felt his death exceedingly; but always supported by her faith, she said, "If my son died in his sins what should I suffer? should I not now be more occupied in blessing God for his mercies towards him than in shedding tears? I shall procure for his eternal repose all the suffrages I can, and henceforward prepare for death. Hitherto I have done nothing for God, I

shall now offer Him for the rest of my life a sacrifice of praise."

To prepare for death, she made a retreat of ten days: she came out of it laden with graces, and more determined than ever to live to God. Her love of penance increased as she approached the end of her course; her confessor was often obliged to moderate her ardour for corporal mortifications. She used to say that God expressly conducted her to a house wherein great austerities were practised, that she might share in them. Her health was extremely delicate, yet the tenderness with which they treated her greatly afflicted her. When they served her up any thing dainty, they were obliged to have recourse to her docility, to prevail with her to use it. Though absolutely forbidden by physicians to fast or abstain, yet she sometimes prevailed on them to let her do so, for she always persuaded herself she did nothing to appease the justice of God. The subjection of will to which she condemned herself after having so long enjoyed her liberty, should be sufficient to inspire her with confidence. She followed all the rules of the monastery, and surpassed the most exact religious in fidelity to the first sound of the bell, and this even for nineteen years, which were terminated by long and painful infirmities. For a length of time she was obliged to have recourse to frequent bleedings to prevent apoplexy. Ten months before her death she was attacked by a putrid fever, the effects of which confined her to bed for five entire months. However great her sufferings a murmur never escaped. Always mild, peaceful, and recollected, she did not even inquire the opinion of the physicians as to her state. One day that she appeared in her agony perceiving the nuns shed tears, "Alas!" said she,

“what is our exile on earth? allow me to quit it without afflicting yourselves. What have I been but a burden to you? Implore the divine mercy in my favour, and do not, my dear friends, oppose my happiness. If God receives me into his blessed kingdom, I shall ask him for every good gift in reward for your great charity to me, an unworthy sinner.”

Suddenly she became convalescent, and the community testified the most lively joy; the pious invalid herself was the only person afflicted. But her convalescence was long and painful; her extreme weakness and long confinement to bed occasioned her great agonies, which gave new exercise to her patience. In this sad state the holy Eucharist was her only consolation; as she was not sick enough to receive it by way of *viaticum*, and yet too weak to wait till morning, the community always anxious to satisfy her pious desires, had her communicated at midnight.

Her improvement was but of short duration; on the 11th December she was attacked with a violent cholic: all saw her end was near. She preserved her usual tranquillity, and confessed with the greatest coolness and deliberation. Next day she demanded the holy viaticum. They assured her it was yet time enough, and that it was her desire of dying which made her apprehend it was so near; but she begged there might be no delay, assuring them they would soon see she had reason to be urgent. She prepared for the sacred rite with increased fervour; before she was administered, she asked pardon of the whole community with great humility. Her danger increasing, she received the extreme unction, and with transports of joy pressed her crucifix to her lips, saying the moment was now come wherein

she would never more offend her divine Master. She caused the image of the Holy Virgin, to whom she had always so much devotion, to be placed in her bed. After the recital of "*The recommendation of the soul*," her confessor approached to animate her confidence; she said that this sentiment in her exceeded that of fear. A little after, perceiving some alteration in her countenance, he asked her if any thing pained her. "Yes, reverend father," said she, "my pains are abated, and I fear I shall recover." "Never fear," said the priest, "your illness is declared mortal; this very day you shall go to enjoy God." This restored her peace, which she preserved till then, and when all-absorbed in God, with her lips fastened to the crucifix, she expired the 14th December, 1759. At her own request she was buried in the habit of St. Dominick, and in the cemetery of the religious.



THE
LIFE OF THE VIRTUOUS MARY DIAZ.

From the French of Abbé Carron.

“When comfort shall be taken away from thee, do not presently despair: but wait with humility and patience for the heavenly visit, for God is able to restore thee a greater consolation.”—KEMPIS.

MARY DIAZ was born at Vite, a little village of Old Castile, in Spain, of poor, but virtuous parents. They strove to give her a Christian education, and the little Mary profited so well by their pious lessons, that she soon became the edification of the villagers. From reason's dawn she was remarkable for her tender piety, assiduity at labour, and filial affection; her docility, obedience, modesty, and fervour in the church, already evinced what she would one day become.

As she advanced in years, her progress in virtue became more striking. She carefully shunned those plays and sports which could wound the delicacy of her conscience, and while her young companions amused themselves, she conversed interiorly with God, or listened to the words of life which he never refuses to speak to the humble, simple, and docile. Nevertheless, her devotion was not gloomy, repulsive, nor of that melancholy cast which often brings piety into discredit;

the peace of her soul beamed on her countenance, and lent to her virtue additional charms.

Mary never sought to be dispensed from any duty, under pretence of having more time for prayer, though she found in this holy exercise her greatest delight. Animated with an holy and warm affection for her parents, she cheerfully divided with them the assiduous and painful toils of a country life. For forty years she was their joy and consolation, while her virtues rendered her to the surrounding neighbourhood, "the good odour of Jesus Christ." It was truly admirable to see how well she united indefatigable labour with a spirit of recollection; and a perfect equality of temper with the unceasing attention which the decrepid state of her parents required. She was ever most careful to purify herself from her trivial faults in the sacrament of penance; and the holy Eucharist, in which she often participated, was to her a source of the most precious graces.

God having by a happy death recompensed the virtuous life of her parents, Mary determined to give herself wholly to him. She distributed to the poor the little means she possessed, with a generosity that evinced her unbounded confidence in Providence, and shortly after set out for Avila, where she entered into the service of a lady of rank and fortune. Simple as the dove, she soon became an object of scorn to her fellow-servants; they loaded her with injuries and contempt, and often pushed their malice so far, as to refuse her the portion of food which was allotted her. They gathered even from her piety, new motives for treating her with cruelty.

The poor creature bore their unkindness and injustice with unalterable sweetness and patience,

and never betrayed the least symptom of ill-humour or discontent. Affable and mild towards her persecutors, she suffered all the pain they occasioned in silence, for the love of Christ; so that six years passed in this manner before her mistress became acquainted with her sufferings. This seems extraordinary; but the like often happens among ourselves. Many of our modern matrons, though pious in appearance, are often very careless of their servants, and negligent about their domestics; such was the case with this lady, but as soon as she was reminded of her duty, she speedily remedied the evil, and gave Mary sensible marks of esteem and confidence.

This series of afflictions acquired great merits for the generous Mary; for the true Christian draws from his sufferings advantages the most precious. They became, indeed, for this daughter of the cross, a source of abundant graces. Long before this period, she had consecrated herself to God, by the vow of chastity; she now wished to draw the knot still closer, by making the vows of obedience and poverty.* She was most submissive to, and candid with her confessor; revealing to him all the views and designs with which she was inspired. He approved of all, but was unwilling to receive her vow of obedience; however, this did not hinder her from practising it in the greatest perfection: no person could be more obedient than she was. Thus she evinced the solidity of her devotion, and preserved herself from the many dangers to which self-will conducts in the spiritual life.

Feeling that our Lord called her to closer retirement, and anxious to correspond with the

* None of these vows should be made without consulting our director.

sweet attractives of grace, she begged and obtained permission of Alvarez de Mendoza, then Bishop of Avila, to lodge in a little chamber which opened into the church. There it was her chief delight to pass the day and night in adoration before the Holy Sacrament. Prayer and mortification were now almost her sole occupation. She seldom went abroad, except for confession to the church of the Jesuits, and to visit some pious ladies, who, though of high rank, delighted in cultivating the acquaintance of this humble servant of God. Desirous to profit by her pious converse, they contrived to find out her residence, so that Mary had now the mortification to see her holy exercises interrupted by their visits. But it was only leaving God for God; for her visitors were greatly edified, and often returned home amazed at her great lights on the mysteries of faith and the secrets of the interior life, which she could only receive from the Spirit of God.

Her humility (and we know that this is the basis of all virtue) was now exposed to great danger, from the esteem in which she was held. Let us bless her divine Protector, who, "jealous of her soul with great jealousy," preserved his own work, placing against public veneration the counterpoise of dryness, disgusts, temptations, and interior pains; sometimes permitting the devil to appear to her in frightful shapes. Mary supported with great courage and resignation this painful state. She contented herself by saying, in all the simplicity of a saint, "Ah! Lord, sure you will not abandon me, since I have given you all I had to bestow." It is a great consolation for souls whom our Lord tries in the crucible, to meet confessors who understand the ways of, and act in concert with, the Spirit of God; and this was

not withheld from Mary Diaz, through the great mercy of God. Her director was no other than the celebrated Father Balthasar Alvarez, of the Society of Jesus, a person of consummate sanctity, and endowed in an eminent degree with the discernment of spirits. It was he who assured St. Teresa, whose confessor he was, that her visions, &c., which were then a problem in Spain, were of the Divine Spirit; and she declares in her writings, that she never treated with him of any state of prayer, however sublime, with which he was not acquainted.

This good father soon saw that Mary Diaz was a strong and generous soul, who needed not the milk of children, but could live on the hard bread of tribulation and pain. Hence, in order to make her die to herself, and to perfect in her the work of God, he exercised in her every species of mortification, and treated her with great severity. She experienced nothing from him at times, but reprimands and humiliations. Sometimes he refused to answer her questions, or replied to them so harshly, that she was overwhelmed with grief. One day that he saw her enter the church with some new article of dress, he called her, and, after a severe rebuke, commanded her to go and leave this superfluous article in the middle of the street. The good Mary went instantly and obeyed the command, and then returned to speak to him: whereupon he forbade her to go to communion that day, because of her pride, as he termed it. To this second trial she submitted without a murmur.

The wise director took care that self-love might not find wherewith to feed itself in these occasions; for he persuaded his penitent that humiliations were particularly necessary for her, and not

so much for trials of her virtue, but as means to cure her pride. He but too well knew that many would bear to be mortified well enough, so that their vanity was flattered by the hope that it was only to try them instead of to cure them.

But though Mary Diaz firmly believed that this harsh treatment best suited her, she was tempted to abandon Father Balthasar and choose a milder confessor; but she vigorously resisted the temptation, and resolved never to leave him.

Being greatly annoyed by nocturnal fears, she got a little girl to sleep in her room; but the Father having reproached her with thus showing a want of confidence in God, her Protector, she immediately dismissed the little one. The pious visits of which we before spoke, did not entirely meet his approbation, and he recommended Mary to keep her retreat more closely. She obeyed instantly (a single word sufficed for her) and absolutely forbade herself all such entertainments, though good in themselves, and productive of the spiritual advancement of others. These persons complained bitterly of the man of God, and accused him of extreme severity. To a soul less humble than Mary, these murmurs would furnish a specious pretext to throw off the yoke of holy obedience; besides she had great zeal and charity, and strong fears of not employing the talent which God had given her of benefiting others. Nevertheless, she undertook his defence, and said it would be unjust to blame Father Balthasar—"He has not absolutely commanded me not to receive or pay visits," said she to those ladies, "he only advised me to be more solitary and retired—and is he not right? Would not such a course best suit my ignorance and rusticity?"

Notwithstanding such unlimited obedience, the

Father became not more indulgent; whether it was that Mary might not contract for him too great an attachment, or for other reasons, he sometimes obliged her to confess to other clergymen; in which he no doubt evinced great prudence, as the contrary practice is subject to many inconveniences. The best founded confidence may be entirely lost or lessened for a time, and though it were only in one point, would it not be a great folly to expose one's self to tormenting anxiety in such an important matter as that of confession! Hence, in order to prevent abuses, and, perhaps sacrilege, it is advisable not to be bound to *one* confessor, (not that we approve of the conduct of those who are continually changing directors, which is another abuse). Such was Father Balthasar's rule; and though Mary Diaz wished there might be an exception in her case, through the desire of increasing her merits, and of discharging his own duty, he would not depart therefrom.

Another time he forbade her to approach the holy communion (and her desire of it was very great) until the next time she made her confession to him. The following day she went early to the confessional, that she might not be disappointed. Several others came after, to whom, contrary to custom, the Father attended first, and when the clock struck eleven, he rose up and desired Mary to defer her confession till next day. But he treated her next day in exactly the same manner, and continued to do so for twenty days; however, she never murmured nor felt chagrined, though great her desire of the sacraments. Her virtue now deserved and obtained its crown, for the man of God admiring her obedience and doc-

lity, gave her after this trial, permission to receive the holy Eucharist every day.

Among those who profess piety, how few are those who would willingly submit to such trials. Some would say the confessor was disgusted with them, and that they could not expect in future the same care and attention. Others would say, this priest is a respecter of persons ; he would not treat us rudely if we were distinguished for birth, or wealth, or talents. While the more moderate would allege, that they could not penetrate the motives of such extraordinary conduct; and since frequent communion was their whole strength and consolation, it was strange to deprive them of it. But persons who would murmur and reason in this sort, have nothing of devotion but the shell. If closely examined, they will be found full of self-love, fond of self-will, presumptuous, vain, slaves of their humours, inexorable and harsh towards others, easy and complying towards themselves, full of attachments inconsistent with true piety, and making devotion consist in long prayers and ceremonies, and frequent participation of the sacraments. What a gross illusion !

True, the holy communion is one of the most powerful means to support the weak, to cure the sick and imperfect, and preserve the strong. But in its participation, we should be ever guided by humble obedience to our director; such was the sentiment of Mary Diaz.

The delay of her communion only served to purify her motives and inflame her love ; in fact, she became quite transported with amorous ecstasy, in expectation of her Beloved. It would be impossible to describe the glowing ardours and holy confidence with which she received her Lord. Her faith was so lively that he sometimes, in re-

compense, manifested himself visibly to her; and this happened so often that she imagined it was common to others, till one day as she mentioned it in all simplicity, some persons expressed their amazement at a thing so unusual.

The principal fruit she drew from communion was an insatiable love of sufferings and humiliations. On these matters, so interesting to a follower of Christ crucified, she had a conversation with her confessor, which deserves to be narrated. Declaring to him her sentiments, she distinguished five species of suffering by which a person might glorify God: 1st, the inclemency of the seasons—heats, colds, wind, rain, storms and tempests; however painful, she said persons should joyfully submit to sufferings of this kind, since it was God who made times and seasons. The winter is very cold at Avila, and as Mary was thinly clad, and dwelt in a room open on all sides, she suffered extremely. One day, that she spoke to God of her suffering, he said, “Is it not I who made the seasons, how then can you complain?”

In the second class, she placed sickness, infirmity, hunger, thirst, labours, fatigues, poverty; all these should be borne, she said, as the just punishment of sin.

The third sort, and one by which she thought a person might derive great profit, consists in bearing patiently the defects of others. St. Paul seems to place all perfection in this article—“Bear ye one another’s burdens,” said he, “and thus you will fulfil the law of Christ.” And, O! how melancholy that many Christians, in other respects exemplary, fail in this point! Some appear angels abroad; but if followed into the bosom of their families, are all sourness and ill-

temper. What a pity not to make one generous effort to bear every thing from others, and give them no cause of vexation or chagrin.

Under the fourth head, she placed the censure and contempt, which the misconduct of friends or relatives entails; though it is certainly unjust to censure a whole family for the faults of an individual, and great virtue is necessary to bear such a humiliation. In the last class, she places spiritual desolations, distractions, perplexities, and, in fine, every trial of this kind, whether it come from God, or men, or devils, by his permission. It is in these afflictions, said she, that true virtue appears in all its lustre, since the soul here finds her *cross*, where she would naturally seek her *consolation*.

What wonderful discernment is displayed in these maxims! One could scarcely suppose a poor illiterate villager capable of such judicious reflections; if we were not convinced that true piety, so far from enervating reason or lessening talent, enlightens the one and perfects the other. Indeed, her spiritual Father said, that if he had been useful to her in the attainment of perfection, she had been no less so to him by the communication of her great lights.

Mary was now in her 80th year, her body attenuated by sickness and continual macerations, but her judgment quite sound, and her heart glowing in the furnace of divine love. Sometime before her death, she paid a visit to St. Teresa, with whom she was united by the closest ties of holy friendship.

It is delightful to hear the servants of God converse together: regarding the world as nothingness and vanity, Paradise, or rather the God of Paradise alone, occupies their heart and absorbs

their faculties and powers. Of him only do they converse; his ineffable perfections are the subject of their entertainment. On this occasion, St. Teresa said, "You charm me, dear Mary; how enchanted you must be, seeing yourself now at the end of your course, and ready to receive the promised crown."—"Indeed, Mother Teresa," said Mary, "I am by no means elated at the prospect."—"What," said the saint, "are you not anxious to go and enjoy God?"—"No," said Diaz, "I have no desire whatsoever; but if it was lawful to wish, I would desire to remain suffering longer on earth, to give my God a proof of my love, for, dear mother, *eternity is long enough to enjoy, and time is too short to suffer.*"

Our Lord, as is usual with him, amply rewarded these generous sentiments, in speedily crowning the merits of his servant by a most happy death. She expired in peace. Her dissolution was occasioned as much by the violence of divine love as by the decay of nature. Her sanctity rendered her memory venerable to all who knew her. God grant that the example of her virtues may excite us to labour for their acquirement. May we imitate her humility, obedience, patience, and love of solitude, which St. Ephrem styles, "the ladder to heaven, the school of prayer, the citadel of every virtue."



THE LIFE OF JOHN BAPTIST GASTON DE RENTY.

John Baptist de Renty, of the house of Artois, only son of Charles de Renty, was born at the Chateau de Renty, in Normandy, anno 1611. When he attained the age of seven years, he accompanied his mother to Paris. He commenced his course of humanity at the college of Navarre, and prosecuted them with the Jesuits at Caen. Two persons were charged with the care of his youth—the one, an ecclesiastic, as preceptor; the other, a Protestant, in quality of governor. The principles of the latter would have proved extremely dangerous to the young baron, had not Providence sedulously watched over him. In after life, reflecting on this danger to which he was exposed, he used to say in the fulness of his gratitude, “From my mother’s womb, O Lord, thou hast preserved me.” From Caen he proceeded to the university at Paris, where he distinguished himself for his application and success in his studies, particularly in the mathematics, on which he composed several treatises. But what was the motive of his studies? unfortunately no other than that of obtaining for himself a name, and acquiring a great reputation. This occupied him to the exclusion of the great affair of salvation.

Having one day gone to the person of whom he generally purchased books, the man offered him for sale the “Imitation of Christ;” but de Renty

refused it. Some days after he again proposed it to him, and the thoughtless young nobleman yielded partly through complaisance; but, wonderful to relate, he had no sooner read this inimitable work, than his eyes were opened, and his heart inflamed with love for his divine Master. The grace of God changed him into a new man; from that moment he resolved to sacrifice all to secure his sanctification. In the beginning his fervour carried him too far, for seeing no obstacle to his designs, he resolved to bury himself in retreat, and under a tattered garb withdrew from his paternal home, and wrote the following letter to his father from his solitude:

“Sir,—I doubt not that my change of state afflicts you. Nature makes us sigh over the loss of those whom we hold dear. Man cannot command the first emotions of sudden anger, but I entreat you not to listen to the voice of passion. The finger of God is here. I have wrestled with myself these two years—I have resisted grace. Now, to be faithful to its dictates, I find it necessary to renounce the world; I fear my own weakness would ruin all were I to remain there. The maxims of Christ and those of the world are so opposite that I imagine I should soon abandon the former did I not bury myself in seclusion. It may be said that I could be very devout and yet remain at court; but, Sir, what satisfaction would you feel in seeing me trying to establish reform in those brilliant assemblies where there is so little prospect of success. I should be an object of mockery and contempt, and however willing I might be to endure humiliations for God, I think I should give you more satisfaction in withdrawing wholly from society.

“When we wish to avoid sin we must shun its

occasions. Ah! should we risk our souls for the whole world? Let us then leave the dead to bury the dead, and renounce all to follow Jesus in spirit and truth."

The father of de Renty did not wish to contradict the designs of heaven on his son. However it was not God who guided the first steps of the latter in the way of virtue; he was destined by Providence to edify in public life, and his project of retreat was only the effect of first fervour. His father sent a person for him, who discovered him at Ambois, and led him back to the Chateau de Renty; he there proved how sincere was his return to God, and became so perfect that he soon gained universal confidence, and the nobility of his bailiwick wished to make him their deputy to the parliament of Normandy, though he was then but nineteen years old. He perfectly fulfilled the expectation of his constituents, displayed great wisdom and zeal for the public good in the debates, and conciliated the esteem of all. But he saw danger in the praises which were lavished upon him; and hence, so far from being elated by them, he tried to forget them, and as soon as he could return to his chateau, occupied himself in rebuilding the parish church, and presided over the pious enterprise. To avoid interruption in his religious exercises, he rose every morning at four o'clock, spent an hour in prayer and meditation, and then superintended the workmen who laboured at the sacred edifice. This occupation removed him from many dangerous occasions, at the same time it prepared his soul for the graces which were to recompense his zeal for the honour of his divine Master.

When he reached his twenty-second year, his parents caused him to marry the daughter of the

Count of Dunes, a lady of great virtue. God blessed their union by the birth of five children, three sons and two daughters.

Baron de Renty served his country with honour during the war of Lorraine, and passed for one of the greatest officers of his day; the Duke of Saxe Weymar among many others honoured him particularly; but it was not alone a christian hero the Lord wished to form in his person. Let us contemplate him at the head of his troops, where he was never wanting to his pious exercises. His first care, on halting at a place, was to visit the holy Sacrament. He generally took up his quarters in some religious house, and whilst his military comrades delivered themselves to the pursuit of pleasure, and often of debauchery, he was constantly seen performing his duties as a christian and a soldier.

He was a constant friend of justice and order, and would not suffer in his men a departure from either. Before they marched he enquired of the persons on whom they were billeted, whether there might be any infraction of this rule, and instantly satisfied all reasonable complaints. One day when he was already mounted on his horse, a poor woman complained that a soldier had stolen a shirt from her. The baron assembled the company, and having discovered the delinquent, caused him to deliver the ill-gotten booty. This rigour was censured by men of quality; but de Renty was recompensed by the testimony of his own conscience. His charity once saved him and one hundred and twenty men of his party in one of the villages which had been desolated by the war: he discovered a poor woman, who, not having strength to retreat with her neighbour, was on the point of perishing with sickness and want; the baron pro-

cured the relief of her spiritual and corporal wants, and rendered her every assistance. Touched with gratitude, she declared to him that the troops of the Duke of Lorraine were that night to surprise him and his men ; he at once gave the signal for departure, and thus saved his party.

As faithful to God in the tumult of the camp as in the bosom of his family, he preserved himself from the many dangers which accompany the profession of arms. He was many times placed in most critical circumstances, but preferring God to all, his choice was very soon made between duty and the opinion of the world ; he never hesitated a moment to sacrifice his honour and reputation to the divine law. Being one day challenged by a gentleman who complained of him unjustly, he answered that God and the king forbade this sort of combat, and that he was resolved not to accept the challenge ; but as his refusal proceeded not from fear, but from a principle of religion, he would every day go whither his affairs called him, and defend himself if attacked. The adverse party, listening only to his passion, surprised him and attacked him ; but he defended himself with so much address, that he obliged the enemy to surrender his arms. As generous after the victory as he had been modest before the combat, he preserved inviolably the secret of his triumph, which would have covered him with glory before men.

In all ranks and states there are to be found from time to time, some privileged souls whom the Lord conducts by extraordinary ways—souls which men may admire but cannot imitate ; such was de Renty, for in his twenty-seventh year, having assisted at a mission of the Oratorians, he was so touched by grace, that he resolved to sacri-

fice all for the attainment of a high degree of perfection. This noble project he lost no time in executing; he withdrew from court, renounced his prospects of advancement, and unreservedly devoted himself to the duties of piety and charity.

The soul of the just man is a sanctuary where the most sublime sentiments and heroic desires flourish. We shall penetrate the interior of this servant of Christ before we follow the plan of his exterior conduct; the disposition of his soul was that of a perfect abandonment, and humble submission to the divine will. As to the employment of his time, he every day rose at five o'clock after passing part of the night in prayer; his first sentiment on awaking was one of profound annihilation before the majesty of God, and of union with and adoration of his divine Son and Holy Spirit; he afterwards prostrated himself to reverence the incarnation of the Word, consecrating himself to the infant Jesus, and saluting his good angel, St. John Baptist, and St. Teresa, he prepared to go to the chapel of his chateau. In going thither he passed by a saloon, on the chimney of which was an image of the Holy Virgin and her infant Jesus; he knelt before it, kissed the ground, and repeated that verse of the Ave maris Stella, which commences with *Monstra et esse matrem*—“*Exert for us a mother's care,*” devoted himself and all his family to her service, begged her blessing, and rose up saying, “*Incomparable mother, pray for us.*”

On entering his chapel he profoundly adored the Lord, and held himself in his presence, in the most perfect sentiments of humility and abnegation. At half-past six o'clock he performed his penance, and read on his knees two chapters of the new Testament; at seven o'clock he went to his

oratory, and made there three stations—one of the blessed Virgin, another to St. Joseph, and the third to St. Teresa; he then occupied himself with his duties as a citizen and head of a family until Mass, and did not return from the church until eleven o'clock on the days on which he dined the poor, or half-past eleven on other days. Before dinner he made the examen of the morning, prayed for the church, for the propagation of the faith, and the souls in purgatory; while at table, at which he sat from twelve till the half hour after, a pious lecture was read; after dinner he gave audience to all who came for his advice or instruction, and however occupied, he never failed to spend an hour in the evening before the Holy Sacrament. Before supper he recited some vocal prayers, always with great fervour, and when the repast was ended, listened while they read the life of the Saint of the following day; he then devoted an hour and a half to the instruction of his children, still more to form the heart than the mind; after prayers with all his family, he returned to his oratory, where he meditated till ten o'clock; he then came back to his apartment, and only went to take a necessary repose, after having given his Divine Master new testimonies of love and adoration.

Some will regard this detail as a tissue of trifles. But to appreciate a plan so easy and simple in appearance, let us sound the heart of the good De Renty, and we shall soon learn that *external* order is an infallible sign that all is duly regulated *within*. Let these proud spirits hear the avowal which this obedient son made to his faithful Ananias: "Notwithstanding my infidelities to grace, which I much regret, being nothing but vice and sin, I generally have within me a

lively sentiment, a great plenitude of the presence of the Holy Trinity, or of some other mystery which elevates me to God by a simple view; then I perform all that Divine Providence requires without regarding the greatness or smallness of the thing, but the will of God, and the glory he can derive therefrom. With regard to spiritual exercises which are made in common, I conform to them certainly for edification, but my interior attractive remains unchanged. When God is present, there is no need of seeking him, and when he communicates himself to us in one manner, it is not for us to seek to possess him in another. For my interior conduct then, I have no rule but my attractive—for my exterior, no guide but the will of God; to this I try to conform in all the simplicity of my heart, and I taste, through the divine grace, a solid peace, a profound recollection, and a sentiment of great respect for the Most High."

The pious De Renty went to confession every Thursday, and communicated almost every day. His confessor having enjoined him to disclose the effect produced in his soul by his intimate and continual communication with his Divine Master, behold his answer which he gave in writing:

"The way traced out to conduct me to God through the merits of Jesus Christ, is to walk in great purity, humble and despoiled of myself, to serve the Lord in spirit and truth—to love him with all my heart and soul, and all the powers of my being; to behold in all events only the admirable conduct of Providence—to adore its decrees, and entirely conform to its designs. This sentiment effaces all others from my soul—no longer I venture to say have I any human movement, except some very light and transient—my will is so

ardent and inflamed that I should be consumed if God did not temper the flame which enkindles me. This flame even operates on my members—my whole being speaks for God—I am lost in His immensity—I would wish to annihilate myself therein for His glory—I cannot express this sentiment as I feel it—I stop not considering any thing that passes within me, being penetrated with my own nothingness. You will pardon, Rev. father, the little order that reigns in this detail; I have written as things presented themselves to me—I would reckon myself happy if you knew all my miseries, they would, no doubt, excite your compassion.”

This interior spirit was not acquired in a moment; it cost long and generous efforts, and heroic sacrifices. Hear De Renty again, Souls zealous for your perfection! “*I desire nothing but God. I only ambition a union with Jesus Christ, and the power of rendering him all the homage of which I am capable. I have great want of this divine Saviour. But I should confess to you in gratitude to the Divine Mercy, that he is more master of me than I am of myself—I know I am nothing but sin; but I feel within me my Lord and my God—He is my strength, my life, my peace, my all; may He be your plenitude.*”

These admirable dispositions caused him to embrace every opportunity of speaking of God. “Let us forget all,” wrote he to a friend, “to live only by faith, by which, through the merits of Christ we are united to God himself. Our divine Redeemer came to announce this truth; he has sealed it with his blood, and will one day crown with glory those who have governed themselves by his spirit. Let us seek the Father by the Son—He is the way which leads to him; the most

important point for us is to unite with Jesus Christ, and to be governed by His spirit. There is no soul I am convinced who loves Jesus, in whom we do not perceive singular marks of grace and operations of His Holy Spirit. Let us love this Lord: let us unite ourselves to Him. Miserable sinner, I fear I do not love Him, but I would reckon myself happy to see some fervent souls supply my deficiency."

Let us follow this fervent christian in his exterior conduct. In his frequent visits to the *Hotel Dieu*, to the poor of his parish, and to the prisoners, he never failed to distribute to them spiritual as well as corporal food; but these good works were never performed at the expense of the duties of his state: nothing was more admirable than the order established in his family—his house more resembled a religious community than a secular establishment; besides the spiritual exercises attached to each day, he every Saturday explained to, or instructed them on the epistle and gospel of the following Sunday. He watched over his numerous family with a parent's love, and felt as much joy when any of its members behaved virtuously, as sorrow when they acted wrong; one of his domestics in a fit of rage having committed terrible excesses in the church, his good master wrote to him, "If you knew how much such conduct displeases God, and what scandal it occasions, your heart would be rent with sorrow. Ah! I should give my goods, my blood, my life, to obtain for you that contrition on which your salvation depends. I beseech you as a brother, and command you as a master, to repair your fault."

Full of zeal and tenderness for his children, his only ambition was to render them fervent chris-

tians, being convinced that this quality essentially includes all others, all his cares and efforts were directed towards it. He cherished his domestics and tenantry with a parent's affection ; he every year procured a mission at his own expense in the lands which belonged to him, and never ceased to recommend his stewards to exercise towards all, justice, mildness, charity, and peace.

But in proportion as he advanced in years, the virtuous De Renty progressed in perfection, he very soon acquired in the highest degree self-denial, and detachment from created things. He had so great an attachment for poverty, that the authority of his directors was necessary to prevent his quitting all, and going to a strange country to live by the labour of his hands. He by degrees deprived himself of every thing superfluous, or that he supposed himself to have any affection for : he sacrificed even the books which he habitually used, because of their splendid binding ; dismissed his pages, retaining only some lackeys for his attendants. In fine, he almost deprived himself of all property, by the following act, written by himself :

“I make a total renunciation of myself and of all that belongs to me into the hands of God, on this great feast of the Nativity, constituting Him the proprietor, and myself the steward, to dispense and distribute all my wealth, only according to His will.”

This generous sacrifice is only agreeable to God, inasmuch as it originates in humility, and to what a point did not De Renty carry this virtue ? “If I desired any thing,” said he ingeniously, “it would be to be humbled, despised, regarded as the opprobrium of men—even this favour I deem myself unworthy of. Be you humble, and very

humble," used he often repeat. O happy littleness, how great thou art! The following words were found written in his blood: "My God, I give you my liberty, and I ask of you that sort of annihilation which is necessary for every christian, in order to elevate him to you.

"Signed,

"*Gaston John Baptist de Renty.*"

His love of abjection appeared in all his letters and conversations. Writing to a friend, he said, "All my resolution is contained in these words of David, I have chosen to be an outcast in the house of my God." To another he wrote, "I am led to demand an humble, suffering, and hidden life. Humility," said he, "is the basis of the work of God in us; it renders the creature so little—it so separates her from herself, that she can no longer consider herself as any thing; she is only occupied with the greatness of God and her own nothingness, and not having any thing which she has not received from God, she has no taste or inclination but for him alone. How would he deceive himself who should imagine himself any thing? The soul who knows herself truly, relies not on her own strength, but invariably turns towards God, like a needle to the magnet."

"I am in the presence of God," says he again, "like an egg that has been trodden under foot—I cannot conceive how they think me worth speaking of; the sight of our misery makes us feel the need we have of grace, and establishes in the soul the belief that she can do nothing but retard in herself the operation of God."

Anxious to be reproached for his faults, he asked a person, in every respect his inferior, to

point out to him his defects, and to inform him of all that he did contrary to the perfection to which he aspired. He received his admonitions with respect, generally on his knees, accusing himself as if he had been the most wicked of men. Far from taking any of his titles, scarcely would he permit them to call him *Sir*. At church always mingled with the crowd, in the lower part of the sacred edifice, he was never happier than when under cover of his poor garments, he was taken for one of the humblest citizens.

The king having offered him the charge of counsellor of state, consulting only his humility, he at once refused it, and intreated secrecy on the offer and refusal. The secret was not kept, and some prudent and religious persons having represented to him, that by accepting this offer, he might promote the glory of God, and the good of men, he submitted.

Such humble, fervent piety, entitled De Renty to share in the sufferings of his Divine Master, and he was not long without experiencing them: his severest trial arose from the conduct of his mother. This ill advised woman, condemning without doubt the poor and humble life of her son, entered a law-suit against him for the recovery of immense sums, which she said were due to her, on the demise of her husband. The baron's contempt of riches would have induced him to surrender all, if justice to his children did not oblige him to maintain his right. The business was left to arbitration, and he submitted the choice of the arbiters to his mother, praying them to satisfy her as much as conscience would permit; on the day fixed for decision, he and his virtuous spouse redoubled their prayers that the Lord might terminate the affair to his glory.

The decision was against him, yet he signed the sentence as calmly as if it had been in his favour.

Thinking his mother was now content, he hoped that peace would again revive in his family, but still dissatisfied, she carried the affair before the parliament of Dijon, despite of the pressing solicitations of De Renty, who several times threw himself at her feet, offering her all his fortune, in order to prevent the scandal, arising from her litigation. But in vain; the business was to be tried at Dijon.

Malignant calumnies preceded the arrival of the good baron in that city, and although exposed to the sarcasms of a number of persons who accused him of being an ill-natured son, and an abominable hypocrite, he suffered these indignities with joy, and thus renders an account of them to his confessor:

“24th July, 1643.

“I am then at Dijon since it has pleased God; I well know since my arrival that the design of God is that I should lead a hidden and unknown life, in a spirit of penance for my sins. They say I am a hypocrite—that under the appearance of devotion I conceal my wickedness. This has caused me to be very retired, fearing I should give more scandal than edification, should I appear abroad. A religious community, one even from whom I had reason to expect the contrary, has coalesced against me. But this has been to me a source of great graces; I have visited them, and taken care, while I joyfully suffered the humiliations I met, not to say a single word which could dispose them in my favour, at the same time having sufficient regard to truth. I imagine myself an outcast, and as the scape-goat.

of the ancient law, chased to the desert to atone for my sins, not by simple pains, but by such as carry along with them confusion and humiliation. In rendering you this account, my only view is to please God, and condemn myself." A religious, of eminent virtue, amazed at the calmness with which the baron listened to the atrocious calumnies uttered against him, asked him if he felt not irritated at such treatment? to whom he replied, "No, I have such respect for the will of God, that I cannot afflict myself for any thing he permits; I am such a great sinner, that my mother, and even the whole world has reason to rise up against me."

We know not how this unpleasant affair terminated, but certain it is, that it lessened not in the least that respectful love, which De Renty ever cherished for his parent. He never wilfully thought of her injustice towards him. But we need not be surprised; he was as exemplary for his patience as for his humility; his temper was so equable that it would be hard to say what it was that gave him pain or pleasure; he was never heard to complain. When attacked, during a long journey, with a violent rheumatism, not a word escaped him which could make his sufferings suspected; in spite of him, his torments appeared in his countenance, which caused a religious carmelite, his particular friend, to ask him if he did not suffer much? It is true, he replied, my pains are lively enough to cause me to faint away, but though I feel them in all their rigour, it is God alone who fills my mind and affections. Being delivered from these agonies by the prayers of his pious friend, who with her community made a novena to the Holy Virgin for his cure, he offered

in gratitude a heart of crystal, enchased in gold, to be placed in the chapel of his benefactress.

But he still found occasions of exercising patience. One day, instructing as usual poor strangers at the hospital, a person of the establishment, vexed to see him thus employed, offered him the grossest insults. The servant of God heard him without emotion, and merely prayed him with humility not to interrupt the good work he had undertaken. This sweetness disarmed not the insolent officer, who in a few days after obliged De Renty to discontinue his visits.

Equally patient in small as in great trials, he always preserved his soul in peace. He delighted in conversing with the Lord in his sanctuary—there, hours flew like moments; sometimes the poor interrupted his sweet entertainments, by their importunities. On one occasion of this kind, he said, “I see that if we were more enlightened we would not fancy ourselves embarrassed or annoyed by any thing whatever, because in all events we should only see the will of God, which conducts every thing for our advantage—the inquietudes caused in us by trivial accidents proceed from our ignorance and unmortified spirit. No doubt, we should avoid occasions of distraction; but when they come, we should receive them from the hand of God with sweetness and humility. This is the great secret of the spiritual life, and even a paradise upon earth.

It is most certain that nothing troubles us but our unmortified affections. Let us silence these movements and preserve our souls in peace, that if contradicted in one good work, the same hindrance may help us to practice another. A person prevents you from meditating, or something else, but he helps you to practice patience, which

is more agreeable to God, and more efficacious for your perfection, than any thing you proposed to do in following your own will, for have you not made an act of abnegation, and it is precisely in that perfection consists. The fulness of God is found only in the creature that is void of itself. God forms you for himself, did he write to an invalid, in uniting you to Jesus suffering. Ah, what a favour it is—a thousand times more valuable than you can imagine! If those who taste the joys of the world were enlightened like you, they would discover a splendid prodigy—a christian happy in the bosom of fortune, and a worldling unhappy in the midst of delights. He greatly valued sufferings, and often repeated with St. Teresa, “either to suffer or die.” I see nothing profitable in this life, wrote he to a friend, but sufferings. The consolations of earth mitigate our penance, and hinder the soul from arriving at a more eminent degree of perfection. I do not deny, however, that they may not sometimes be necessary, since our weakness needs support to practise mortification. He wrote thus to his confessor, at the commencement of lent: I thought that no penance would be more rigorous to me, than to be obliged to sit at a sumptuous table, to frequent company, to participate in their pleasures, to mingle in their conversation—it would be an anticipated hell, though God were not offended.

“Few,” wrote he to a lady in affliction, “few know the secret of christianity. Many glory in the title of christian, without a particle of its spirit; several in their prayers, and ordinary actions, raise their thoughts to heaven, but in important actions they are the children of nature; they regard only the earth, or if they look at God,

it is only to lament and complain, and to pray him to condescend to their will, but not to make him the sacrifice of their own; they are unwilling to make him any sacrifices, as if a christian life was not a life of sacrifice, a counterpart of that of Christ crucified.

“God knowing our weakness sometimes deprives us of a father, a child, or a spouse, for our greater good, to make us feel that these human affections remove us from him, and are such obstacles to salvation, that one day we shall regard the privation of these objects as the greatest mercy. Affliction, like wormwood, is bitter to the mouth, but salutary to the heart—it destroys old Adam to make Jesus Christ live in us.”

The pious de Renty was most austere; he took but one meal every day, until he was compelled in consideration of the labours he underwent for his neighbour, to take a little more food. We shall say nothing of the holy cruelty he frequently exercised on his person, which was peculiar to himself, and more to be admired than imitated. When he travelled without his family, he always eat at the same table as the meanest of his fellow-travellers, to practise mortification, and to instruct them by his discourse. He passed the night stretched on a plank or seated in a chair. His privations at table were not less exemplary; he eat little, and always of the worst kind. One fast day, dining with some friends, it was perceived he had only eaten a few pears; his modesty and recollection at table were such as proved that while he satisfied the wants of nature his heart was rivetted in God.

Often when he visited some sick or poor at Paris, and that he happened to be too far off to be at home at dinner hour, he contented himself with

a crust of bread and some water, rather than interrupt the progress of his good works. He mortified the other senses equally, as the taste, continually subjecting his body to some new trial or fatigue, at which he was very ingenious. He conceived not, as he said to a friend, how a person could treat a beast (thus he denominated his body) mildly, who had more need of a spur than a bridle. He only granted nature what was absolutely necessary to prevent it from sinking. And yet, how precious was his health to the community! There was no good work at Paris, or in the provinces, in which he bore not a part: no enterprise which involved the glory of God, in which he did not co-operate—no pious association of which he was not a promoter or a member. He had correspondents throughout the kingdom. From all quarters his advice was solicited, for the establishment of hospitals, seminaries, &c.

Sometime after his death, a person wrote thus from Caen: De Renty was our support in executing our designs for the glory of God, and the good of our neighbour. We often wrote to him, as well for the establishment of our hospitals, as for the erection of the house for penitent women. We also took his advice for the correction of those impious men who openly profaned the Holy Sacrament.

From Dijon one wrote:—We confess Baron de Renty achieved great things in this province, in all places he has advanced the cause of God. His days were filled with the plenitude of God—perhaps he spent not a moment which did not advance the divine interests.

To give a more perfect idea of his charity, let us mention that he learned to bleed, to dress wounds and sores, in order to be of more use to

others. He dedicated himself to all that is most painful and humiliating in the service of the sick, and in course of time acquired such a reputation for skill, that crowds flocked to consult him on divers sorts of maladies. He one day in each week dined three poor persons, waiting on them himself most respectfully, and with head uncovered; after dinner, he instructed them on some of the principal mysteries of religion, and in dismissing them gave them an alms, repeated to them some salutary advices, and conducted them even to the door. On Christmas day he gave a poor child his dinner, in honour of the Divine Infant. On the Epiphany, he invited a poor man, a poor woman, and a little child to dinner, in honour of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph. Maunday Thursday, he washed the feet of twelve poor men, and served them at table; he gave them another dinner on the feast of his patron St. John Baptist.

Baron de Renty was the first who thought of succouring the English catholics who took refuge in France, in the time of persecution. He engaged several persons of quality to unite in this good work, and charged himself with distributing part of the alms, in the most remote corners of Paris. He every month visited the asylums of the unfortunate with great respect, and bestowed their little pension on the poor inmates with all the politeness of genuine charity. Returning one day from this edifying course, he said to a friend: "These certainly are true christians, since they have forsaken all for God; they are satisfied with two crowns per month, who have renounced for conscience sake an immense fortune—christianity consists not in words, but in works." But his charity was not confined to those objects who fell under his observation; he assisted the poor fugi-

tive Irish—the captives of Barbary, and the missionaries of the Levant, were also the objects of his solicitude. He indefatigably laboured to ameliorate the condition of the felons of the hospital of Marseilles, and contributed in a great degree to the conversion of the savages of Canada, by aiding their generous apostles. He disdained not to learn different trades, that by teaching them to children he might furnish them with honest means of subsistence. He contributed to correct a thousand abuses among tradesmen and mechanics, by teaching them to live according to the spirit of religion. One day, he led one of his friends to a poor man who gained a livelihood by making baskets, &c., in a cellar; having finished one that he had commenced there a few days before, he left it to the poor man with an alms and thanks, for having enabled him to be useful to some unfortunate person, by teaching him his trade.

At Dijon he taught the Ursulines to make up different remedies for the poor. Nothing, say these ladies, was so moving as to see this respectable man performing the lowest and most painful functions for the sick, sometimes spending whole hours before the fire making up medicines, without allowing the lay sisters even to lessen his fatigues. But “love knows no difficulties in the service of the beloved,” as himself said to an intimate friend—it seems that my soul is all charity—I cannot express the desire I feel of seeing my heart take a new life with the Divine Infant Jesus, and consuming itself like his with love for men.

At his chateau, he received the poor lepers, lodged them in one of his finest apartments, cleansed and served them with his own hands,

and did not dismiss them till they were perfectly cured. At Paris he visited them in their asylum in St. Germain.—I have seen him there, says an eye-witness, cleanse the most revolting ulcers.

What more eloquent testimony in favour of de Renty's charity than that furnished at the hotel Dieu, which he attended during the space of twelve years. At coming in and going out he went to visit the holy Sacrament, and remained before it with such devotion as edified the beholders. At his entry it was to offer this action to the Lord, and to ask him for the necessary graces. At going forth it was to entreat Him to bless and render the good work efficacious. He continued to serve the poor patients from two o'clock till five in the afternoon. He several times kissed their feet, dressed their sores, and taught the religious in attendance how to make up an ointment very useful to their patients.

It would be impossible to say the number of young women whom he preserved from seduction, or withdrew from bad habits, and afterwards placed in security from future danger. At Dijon he met a wicked woman, whose multiplied infirmities announced her guilty of most shameful disorders; her very aspect inspired horror; she exhaled a putrid odour; no person ventured to approach her, and she was on the point of being turned out of her lodging; de Renty prevailed with her host not to dismiss her, provided her a nurse and all necessary remedies, carried her every day broths and other nourishments, instructed, consoled, and finally restored her to health, honour, and religion. The hospital of St. Gervase offered an asylum to poor travellers during the night; our servant of God, asked, and obtained permission, to give out catechism there

every evening, and produced great fruit. He continued the good work many years, until it was taken up by a virtuous ecclesiastic.

These charitable acts will not astonish us when we consider how dear the poor were to de Renty; on meeting them he cordially embraced them, and never spoke to them without taking off his hat, beholding only Jesus Christ in their persons. Learning that a man had been nine years in irons in Normandy, because he could not procure a judgment against a powerful party, he took his cause in hand, and by procuring his liberation restored an honest citizen, who afterwards became an ecclesiastic. This good man had acquired a sovereignty over all hearts, which was really wonderful: words in his mouth seemed to have a particular virtue; they produced on his hearers an effect as prompt as it was salutary. Many of our separated brethren were indebted to him for their conversion, several sinners for their amendment, and numbers of weak souls for their perseverance in virtue. His piety was so universally known, that passing for a man endowed with celestial lights, he performed for many the office of spiritual director: a young woman of quality, the Countess of Chartres, having passed her first years in the pleasures of the world, was converted by the prayers and example of the baron; she consulted him on all the affairs of her soul, and received his advice as if it had proceeded from the mouth of God himself. This created between them an holy friendship, but however pure their intimacy, de Renty paid her as short visits as possible, and always standing. Complaining of this to a friend, who mentioned it to the baron, he said—I have adopted this custom because my duty to God and the countess requires it; if we

sat down, perhaps we might say more than would be useful; I assure you I don't maintain this correspondence but with great confusion, being so ignorant, and so great a sinner, although I know it to be the will of God, as several pious persons have assured me.

Notwithstanding this apparent severity, De Renty interested himself ardently for the salvation of the sex. Behold the salutary advices he addressed them:

"As it was a woman who caused so many evils in the world, it would seem that the Lord wishes that women may repair them, since he has destined them to superintend the education of their children, and take care of their household—while men preside abroad, these govern at home.

"All orders of society being then confided to women, their functions are most important; to educate their children in piety, to preserve them in innocence, to dispose them to receive grace, to know and follow their vocation; these duties merit their most serious reflections, since on their discharge depends the good of mankind, and that a rigorous account will one day be required concerning them.

"They should take the greatest care of their children from their tenderest years, correcting with sweetness, and by their own example, what they perceive reprehensible in them. Let them remember that vice should be corrected in its source, or it will continue to increase till it becomes incorrigible. They should never suffer their children to be alone, or to mix with other children, without the presence of some virtuous person.

"They should take care to have their domestics instructed in their holy religion, and be vigilant

over their conduct, lest they indulge in cursing, immodesty, drunkenness, or other vices.

“A mistress of a house should take care that her servants are well treated in their sicknesses, and visit them herself at times. She should take care that their wages be duly paid, and that they be provided with necessaries, lest they be tempted to steal or murmur

“Let her, not only in her own house, but in those of her friends, introduce the pious custom of common prayer. If her husband is absent on these occasions, let her take his place.

“Let her be continually employed, as also her children, lest time be uselessly spent; and let her lead her little ones with her in the charitable visits which she will not fail to pay her poor neighbours.

“Let her take care of the linen and ornaments of the parish church, lest our mysteries be contemned. Let her greatly respect priests, regarding only the dignity of their ministry, and inspire all that depend on her with the like sentiments.

“Let her receive visitors with charity and hospitality, trying to make it an occasion of good instead of passing her time in idle discourse. She will not preserve in her house indecent pictures or images, or suffer her children to read novels, &c., or to dress immodestly: in fine, she will do all she can to establish the reign of God, and to make those under her, love him with all their heart.”

De Renty enjoyed universal confidence from his modest exterior, affable and edifying and instructive converse, and unalterable sweetness. Charity influenced all his actions, he was a living image of that virtue.

His love to God never let him lose his presence

Hence, in the country, contemplating the gifts which His bounty so profusely pours in nature's lap, he walked with his head respectfully uncovered. With such sentiments he could not deliver himself in a cold dry manner. I must be silent, wrote he, towards the close of one of his letters, yet if I cease to speak, the fire which consumes me will not repose. Let us burn then—let us burn in all and in every place for God; since we are his, why should we not live for him?

He bore the death of his son, a most promising youth, with submission, and even with joy. His lady, whom he tenderly loved, being taken ill soon after, he so far mastered himself as not to let his grief appear. I cannot deny, said he, that I feel the most piercing sorrow, but I am so glad to have an opportunity of sacrificing to God what I hold so dear, that if decency permitted, I would make public rejoicing. I do not know, wrote he, what mortification means if a person has conformity; because having no resistance in the spirit, there is no mortification; whosoever feels only what God wishes is content.

It was, no doubt, by this continual immolation he attained such a degree of prayer. His body only was on earth: his thoughts and affections were fixed in heaven. Being taken ill on the 11th April, 1649, he exhibited all the patience in his extreme sufferings of which he had through life been such a perfect model. A person having inquired if he suffered much, O, said he, the love of God lessens sufferings—his servants suffer nothing. It is true, said he to another, I suffer much, but I do not feel it, because my thoughts are elsewhere. When presented with some lenitives—these, said he, won't make us live or die: they are then unnecessary. He took without

murmur the most disgusting remedies. A dear friend having come from the country to see him on the first news of his illness: Ah, said he, with an ardour which indicated his disengagement from creatures, I no longer wish but God alone. He recommended the missions to this friend, praying him to employ in them all his zeal, as the most proper means of glorifying Jesus Christ.

Calling for Madame de Renty, he said, I recommend the poor to you—will you not take care of them? you will do it for me; and do not be afraid you will thereby lessen your property. The third day of his illness he received the Holy Viaticum with great devotion, and remained a long time in profound silence. Some one testifying his astonishment hereat, he said he ought not to speak in the presence of the Word whom he had received, and that he was occupied with the joy of a soul who sees itself on the point of being united to its first principle.

Being told that the physicians thought if he relaxed his attention, that it would lessen his pains: Ah! said he, I never felt such joy—I desire to be dissolved and be with Christ. He afterwards asked them to open the window that he might behold the beauty of the sun, and exclaimed: “O beautiful day of eternity, which will know no night!”

The more he suffered, the more he applied to prayer and contemplation. In his agony, he said, “Courage, courage, eternity approaches!” Suddenly he gazed at something fixedly, and with a smiling countenance, for a quarter of an hour; then making an effort he sat up, and said as if enraptured, “I adore you, I adore you.”

He answered to the prayers of the church while he was anointed, and having given his last bless-

ing to his children, he said to a noble friend, "The perfection of a christian consists in union with God by faith—let us be faithful, and unite all our actions to those of His Son—I hope we shall one day behold each other, never to be separated—pray for me." Then kissing his crucifix, and invoking Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, the pious De Renty expired in his thirty-seventh year, on the 24th of April, 1649.

MEANS OF PERFECTION AND INTERIOR LIFE.

By Piere Surin, S. J.

1st. *Self-knowledge and penance*, to be acquired by penetrating in retreat into one's interior, seeing one's self-love, self-esteem, and confounding one's self for them before God. Looking upon venial sins, as worldlings upon mortal sin after conversion, and upon first irregular movements, as upon deliberate sins, with the spirit of St. Magdalen. Such is the purgative life. We should enter deeply into ourselves, watch our actions, examine our motives, see our passions and irregular movements, with the habitual vice which produces them. We should also search the remedy, be on our guard in dangerous occasions, resist strongly, repent if overcome, rising without delay or discouragement. Such should be our interior occupation.

2nd *means*.—*Recollection*.—This should consist in closing our senses to exterior things which are unnecessary, permit them no voluntary action for which we could not assign a satisfactory reason; admitting nothing into our interior capable

of diverting our attention from God and ourselves; avoiding useless curiosities, all wishes to see, and hear, and talk of every thing curious or interesting.

The 2nd duty of recollection, is to watch over our tongue, and to be circumspect in our words: a man who cannot be silent, will never acquire solid virtue.

The 3rd point is not to meddle with the affairs of others, nor to learn any thing unnecessary about them. The true solitary sees no one, though surrounded by men. False zeal, human respect, complaisance, impatience, vain fear, &c., &c., are consequences of the contrary.

Let us keep our eyes cast down, without gazing at others, their actions, or their countenance, in going through the house, &c. Let us not seek for news, &c., or our prayer will be distracted, and lectures superficial, &c. The eyes of body and mind, says St. Vincent Ferrer, should be averted from others, that we may better see ourselves.

The 3rd means.—Interior peace.—The only remedy for our troubles, is to judge of things by their merit, to conceive grand ideas of God, to learn to despise the world, to make no account of what is to die and perish, not to value the esteem or judgments of men, to make account only of God and His service. This will nobly elevate the soul, she will regard as far beneath her what she previously valued, she will begin to know what she is, and to fear what she should be, and feel more anxious to correct a trivial fault than to cure a long illness.

The practice of this *peace*, consists in not being warm about any thing. 2nd, in not meddling with others. 3rd, in calming all unquiet move-

ments. 4th, in avoiding useless thoughts and occasions of agitation, multiplicity of affairs; in reading the Saints' lives, &c.

The 4th means.—*Vigilance and assiduity in holy Exercises.*—Constant application is indispensable; it must be *continual* and *universal*, not doing any thing without examining her motives and what God demands, and how we behave regarding it. Despising trifles, we shall do no good. These are our rising, eating, reading, writing, praying, conversing, &c., &c. A person is not good by merely performing an act of virtue occasionally, or on great occasions only; we should never relax, within, without, at table, in company, recreating, studying, we should practice virtue. That is, we should act with a pure intention in the presence of God, without malice, &c., by this means the habit of acting supernaturally is formed and acquired.

Exercises of piety should never be omitted, and *at every hour* we should renew our purpose of tending to perfection.

The 5th means.

This comprises three or four

1st. *Purity of intention*, until the habit be perfectly acquired, of acting for God, examining our motives, instincts, and holding back, if pride or self-love be discovered as influencing us.

2. The amendment of our life, general change of manners, habits, and firm resolve not to suffer any voluntary defect. The predominant to be made matter of particular examen.

3. The practice of the presence of God.

4. The mortification of our passions and irregular appetites.

TO OUR BLESSED LADY OF MOUNT CARMEL.

Flos Carmeli!
Virtis florigera!
Splendor Cœli!
Virgo puerpera
Singularis!

Mater mitis!
Sed viri nescia
Carmelitis
Da privilegia
Stella Maris!

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